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ABSTRACT

This evaluation report is presented at the conclusion of the third year of Project Assist, a program funded under the Emergency School Assistant Act (ESAA). The main focus of the project was on improving student reading and mathematics skills primarily through contact with instructional teacher aides and special supplementary instructional materials. Included within the third year of the program were two additional components: Project Outreach, which called for graduate social work interns to work with children referred because of behavioral or attitudinal problems; and Trilogy, which employed a triethnic school-community theatrical troupe to portray student-teacher situations in a satirical fashion. In this report each program is described in detail and its outcome evaluated. Included in the document are the reports of three outside consultants. (JD)

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

1975-76

ESAA III Pilot Project Assis

June 30, 1976

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Publication Number: 75-47

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ESAA III Pilot Project Assist
Austin Independent School District
1975-76

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A Technical Report which presents more detailed data collected during the evaluation of this project is on file in the Office of Research and Evaluation and a copy has also been placed in the AISD Professional Library.

ABSTRACT

EVALUATION OF ESAA III PILOT PROJECT ASSIST, 1975-76

Description of Program

This year was Project Assist's third year of funding as an ESAA Pilot Project. As in years past, the main focus of the project was on improving student reading skills, primarily through contact with instructional teacher aides and special supplementary instructional materials. The project also continued to be directed toward students at both elementary and junior high school levels.

However, several changes were made in this year's program. New components were added. Project Math, a program parallel to the already existing Project Read, was to be installed in one of the project junior high schools. There was also a component called Project Outreach which called for graduate social work interns from the University of Texas to work with children referred because of behavioral or attitudinal problems. Trilogy was another new component which employed a tri-ethnic school-community theatrical troupe to portray student-teacher situations in a satirical fashion.

The elementary schools served by the project were changed, and one junior high school received extended services. This year's Project Assist schools were: Rosewood, Oak Springs, and Sims elementary schools and Martin and Allan junior high schools.

Funding for this year's project, not including money for evaluation, came to $325,143. Staff were to include a Coordinator and a Staff Development Specialist, as well as 32 instructional aides and 2 secretaries.

Evaluation Purposes

Because of a shortage in funds awarded for evaluation (see below) this year's evaluation of Project Assist had modest goals. The AISD Office of Research and Evaluation collected information only on the attainment of a few outcome objectives. An attempt was also made to provide some minimal information on program implementation and management by contracting with outside consultants to collect and report such information based on mid-year and year-end program audits. The program evaluator combined information from both of the above sources to provide relevant data for a small number of decision questions.

Evaluation Activities

This year, only $10,056 was provided for evaluation of Project Assist. Of this amount, $3,500 was allotted to pay outside consultants to perform

management and process audits. An additional $5,000 was allocated to pay the salary of a half-time intern to collect, analyze, and report outcome information, as well as to hire and coordinate the work of the outside consultants.

Outcome Objectives: The outcome objectives were designed to measure possible changes in the achievement, attitudes, and behavior of students and in the attitudes of faculty, as a result of contact with the various Project Assist components. For Project Read and Project Math, there was an analysis of achievement data, using the Reading and Math subtests of the California Achievement Test as the criterion measures. Data were also collected on attitude changes for the Math component, using the Math Attitude Test. Teacher ratings of success of the Outreach component were recorded on a questionnaire constructed by the Evaluator. Another questionnaire recorded audience comprehension of Trilogy goals and ratings of the troupe's success in meeting those goals. The evaluation design also called for information to be gathered on changes in ethnic attitudes for Project Assist students participating in Trilogy. However, this aspect of the Trilogy component was not implemented, so this information was not collected.

Evaluation Findings

The following information represents a summary of this year's findings. Both outcome data collected by the Evaluator employed by the Office of Research and Evaluation and process and management data collected by the outside consultants were considered in compiling this summary. Most of the information given below was presented in the report section containing decision questions, although some additional information was pulled from report sections dealing with the program context, and interrelationships between program implementation and outcomes.

Program Implementation and Achievement of Objectives: Project Read and Project Math were implemented to some degree: materials were ordered and aides were in classrooms. However, the proposed curriculum was largely unimplemented. Very little training was provided for aides, none for teachers. Reading and math outcome achievement goals were not met, nor were math goals for improved math attitudes met.

It was suggested in the Interrelationships section of the report that lack of sufficient aide and teacher training may have been a significant factor in the failure of the components to achieve their outcome objectives. Evidence from the previous year's evaluation was given to support this view.

Trilogy did not incorporate Project Assist students this year and did not provide the number of performances proposed for Project Assist schools. By the close of the year, a start had been made at developing a teacher training model and at collecting information to help expand Trilogy to the elementary level. Trilogy had met two of the outcome objectives set for it, which specified that audiences would perceive Trilogy goals and see troupe members as pursuing those goals effectively. Because of lack of implementation of this component, no information was gathered on change in interethnic attitudes among Project Assist Trilogy members.

Project Outreach was implemented essentially as proposed. Its outcome

objective, concerning teacher ratings of improvement in referred students, was met.

Cost of Program Components: It was noted in the body of the report that of the $335,199 granted to Project Assist this year, $293,400 (almost 90% of the funds) were allotted to Project Read and Project Math. Trilogy was to receive $1750 and Project Outreach was to receive $1426. Administrative and clerical support services were funded at $28,567 and, as reported above, Evaluation was funded at $10,056.

Project Context: Some of the events surrounding the project which were not within the control of project management were discussed. These factors included the late release of federal funds and the resignation of the previous Project Coordinator, with the ensuing vacancy in the Staff Development Specialist position. (Both release of funds and the Coordinator's resignation occurred in early September 1975.) Another contextual factor hindering program implementation was the failure to resolve discrepancies between proposed program activities and actual school employment of program resources. An example was the occasional employment of the Project Assist aides in a non-instructional capacity at project schools. This occurrence was considered to reflect a fundamental and complex problem in coordination between line and staff district personnel.

Project Management: The consultant reporting on project management gave a mixed report. On the positive side, Project staff members seemed to be performing duties appropriate to their roles. And once staffing reached the proposed level (in January, when the new Staff Development Specialist was hired), project management seemed to shift from a crisis oriented approach to a more systematic one.

However, one vital function, monitoring of program implementation was reportedly never adequately performed, seemingly to the detriment of the program. In previous years this monitoring was done by evaluation staff. This year, funds were not provided for evaluation to perform the monitoring function, nor was the duty clearly assigned to one management position. The expectation seemed to be that the Project Coordinator and Staff Development Specialist should make occasional classroom monitoring visits. According to the evaluation consultant's report, very few classroom visits were ever made. Several of the teachers interviewed by this consultant reported that their greatest criticism of the project was project management's lack of support to them in organizing the instructional process.

II

DECISION QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

INTRODUCTION

In proper context, the decision questions for an evaluation are formulated by the decision makers involved, with technical assistance from the evaluation staff during the design phase of the evaluation. Evaluation then serves the decision-making process by providing information relevant to those questions and assisting the appropriate administrators to arrive at a recommendation concerning the decision. Ultimate responsibility for making the decisions always rests with the particular decision-makers charged with that responsibility.

This section of the report provides a summary of the information contained in the rest of the report. For more detail on the findings reported here, refer to the other sections of this report where the findings are presented in greater detail. In most cases, page references are provided for the detailed findings.

For the 1975-1976 school year a different procedure has been adopted regarding the recommendations. Formerly, the ORE staff made recommendations based on their perceptions of the evaluation findings. This year the policy adopted in AISD is for ORE to provide the relevant decision-makers and administrators in the district with a copy of the decision questions and evaluation findings. These administrators will have responsibility for making recommendations which will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees along with the final report.

Special Note

This year, the evaluation information collected on ESAA Pilot Project Assist by the Office of Research and Evaluation was limited to outcome information, on the end results of project activities. Because outcome evaluation information is by definition provided only at the end of a project year, and because proposals for federal funding must be submitted in mid-year, an evaluation of the sort done for Project Assist this year can provide little timely information for District decision-makers in planning projects for the coming year.

As a result of this limitation, a number of the decision questions formulated for 1975-76 Project Assist have essentially been answered for 1976-77, without the benefit of evaluation information from the present year. And in fact the ESAA Pilot proposal for the coming year is considerably different from the 1975-76 proposal.

However, the information which was collected relevant to those questions is reported here and decision-makers are asked to consider it, since some of the 1975-76 Project Assist components are continued in the 1976-77 proposal, and since future programs may consider other components similar to those in 1975-76 Project Assist.

Where appropriate, information on project implementation reported by the outside consultants is included in the summary of relevant data below. However, there are a number of limitations in the methods used to collect this information, as reported in Chapter IV. Therefore, this information can be considered as only suggestive of actual program events.

A. SYSTEM-LEVEL QUESTIONS

1. Should the program be continued in the District?

RELEVANT FINDINGS:

a. Project Read and Project Math: Outcome data collected by the Office of Research and Evaluation shows that math achievement and attitudes toward math did not improve as a result of Project Math. (See pages 31 and 32 .) Reading achievement also failed to show any over-all improvement. (See pages 29 and 30).

Because of inadequate funding, no classroom observations were made by the Evaluator to determine how the aides worked with teachers and students, how project materials were employed, or the degree of implementation of the proposed project curriculum. The contracted consultant's report, based on interviews with some project participants, indicated that for the most part, aides were used instructionally, but that aides and teachers received very little inservice training (pages 56-58, 87-88). The curriculum specified in the project proposal for reading and math was largely unimplemented, with the exception of the reading labs at Martin, which were in operation throughout the year. (pages 55-56, 61, 78, 86-87).

b. Trilogy: Two Trilogy performances were held at Project Assist schools, (pages 33 and 136). Data collected by the Office of Research and Evaluation at those performances showed that Austin Independent School District faculty and staff who viewed performances by the Trilogy troupe were generally able to discern major Trilogy goals. (See pages 33-35). They were also enthusiastic about the success of Trilogy in meeting these goals. (See pages 36 and 37).

However, it should be noted that as reported by the outside consultant, only a small portion of the Trilogy component proposed for Project Assist this year was ever implemented. The consultant's mid-year report on Trilogy implementation indicated that the teacher training model had not yet been implemented, nor had Project Assist students been recruited for membership in Trilogy. (See pages 113 and 114). The end of the year report indicated that in April for a number of reasons discussed in that report, the Coordinator of Project Assist had requested and obtained permission from the ESAA Regional Program Officer to considerably reduce the scope of Trilogy this year. The component was to be limited to a teacher training model. This meant that the staff would make no attempt to recruit Project Assist students to be Trilogy cast members this year. Nor would any performances be held for parents of students in Project Assist schools. (See page 132).

Although Trilogy did not achieve its proposed goals for implementation this year, an event indicating Trilogy's strong appeal and potential for impact occurred at Martin Junior High. Following the performance there, a teacher who was a former Trilogy cast member decided, on her own initiative, to form a Trilogy-like troupe at Martin. She succeeded in doing so, and this spin-off was named "Eastside Express." After forming this group, the teacher contacted members of the Trilogy staff to ask for assistance. It was decided to make available to this group the consultants that were provided through ESAA funding, since the group was serving some of the needs for which funds had been granted.

c. Project Outreach: Outcome information collected by the Office of Research and Evaluation indicated that faculty familiar with students referred for Project Outreach felt that about half of the students had improved in the areas for which they were referred. (See pages 39-41). In a large majority of the cases where improvement was shown, faculty members felt the Project Outreach interns had contributed toward that improvement. Even in some cases where no improvement was shown, faculty credited the interns with helping somewhat. (See pages 39-41). The contracted consultant's report indicated that this component had been implemented essentially as proposed, although some problems and additional areas of focus were noted. (See pages 120 and 121, and 149-153).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This year, recommendations will be made by appropriate administrative staff.

2. Should Austin Independent School District aides be used as instructional aides?

RELEVANT FINDINGS:

Achievement scores in reading and math did not improve overall in Project Assist schools this year as a result of having instructional aides in the classrooms. (See pages 29-32).

Contracted evaluation reports indicate that there was some mixture of aide duties at the school level, such that Project Assist aides were assigned other duties in addition to instructional duties, and that aide morale may have been adversely affected in such cases. (See pages 54 and 55, 82-86). Special training for the instructional aides this year was apparently limited to preservice training, and monthly workshops for aides beginning in January, (Pages 56-58, 87, 88, and 93). Apparently no training sessions were geared specifically toward teachers or both teachers and aides. This scarcity of training, which was related to Project Assist's lack of a Staff Development Specialist for much of the year, is a potentially serious problem in the employment of instructional aides, since evaluation findings from previous years indicate that while the presence of trained aides promotes individualization in the classroom, the presence of untrained aides seems to decrease individualization. (See 1974-75 Final Report, ESAA II Project Assist, p. 3). The explanation for this seems to be that untrained aides require a substantial degree of guidance from the teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This year, recommendations will be made by appropriate administrative staff.

B. FEDERAL-LEVEL QUESTIONS

1. Should the program be refunded?

RELEVANT FINDINGS:

Federal decision-makers should consider at least three factors in deciding whether to re-fund Project Assist. In making decisions regarding the project's current components, decision-makers should consider the degree of success in achievement of objectives for each of the project components. The decision-makers should also consider the relative cost of the various program components. Finally the federal decision-makers should consider factors within Austin Independent School District which influenced the administration of federal funds for Project Assist this year.

Degree of success in program implementation and achievement of outcome objectives, 1975-76: Information relevant to the degree of success in implementation and achievement of objectives for each of the project components is contained in the section on findings for System Level Question 1. (See pages 5 and 6). In general, these results indicate that Project Read and Project Math were implemented to some degree: materials were ordered and aides were in classrooms. However, the proposed curriculum was largely unimplemented. Very little training was provided for aides, none for teachers. Reading and math outcome achievement goals were not met.

Trilogy did not incorporate Project Assist students this year and did not provide the number of performances proposed for Project Assist schools. By the close of the year, a start had been made at developing a teacher training model and at collecting information to help expand Trilogy to the elementary level. Trilogy had met two of the outcome objectives set for it, which specified that audiences would perceive Trilogy goals and see troupe members as pursuing those goals effectively. Because of lack of implementation of this component, no information was gathered on change in interethnic attitudes among Project Assist Trilogy members.

Project Outreach was implemented essentially as proposed. Its outcome objective, concerning teacher ratings of improvement in referred students, was met.

Cost of program components: Funding appropriated for Project Assist this year can be roughly broken down into the following components: Central administrative and clerical support services, funded at $28,567; Project Read and Project Math, funded at $293,400; Trilogy, funded at $1750; Project Outreach, funded at $1426; and Evaluation, funded at $10,056. As can be observed above, the bulk of funds were allocated for Project Read and Project Math. The major items included $147,200 for instructional aide salaries and $98,824 for instructional materials and hardware. The salary and support services of the Staff Development Coordinator are included under Projects Read and Math, since the duties of that position, as described in the proposal, were limited to those components. Trilogy was primarily supported out of ESAA Basic funds, so Project Assist received funding only for Trilogy consultants and their travel expenses. Similarly, Project Outreach was coordinated primarily by a faculty member from the University of Texas, so Project Assist provided funds only for intern travel, materials, and staff training consultants.

Any decision made regarding refunding these components or similar ones in the future, should consider their relative cost, balanced against their actual (and potential) degree of effective implementation, and actual and potential success in producing meaningful outcomes for students. This year the bulk of ESAA pilot money was spent on Project Read and Project Math. Some of the more difficult aspects of these components were not implemented, and the components failed to achieve the hoped-for student outcomes.

Trilogy had relatively small funding. It was largely unimplemented, although there were indications it had potential appeal and could be readily implemented given sufficient personal investment by those responsible for it. It successfully met two fairly "easy" outcome objectives demonstrating audience support, but its potential as a vehicle for attitude change remains untested.

Project Outreach likewise received comparatively little ESAA money (being funded largely by a NIMH grant administered through the University of Texas). However, it was apparently well implemented in project schools and it did achieve an outcome objective based on at least perceived benefit to students.

Project Context: Some of the factors influencing management of Project Assist this year were not within the control of the project management. These include the late release of federal funds and the resignation of the previous Project

Coordinator with the ensuing vacancy, in the Staff Development Coordinator position. (See page 87).

Other factors involved coordination with District personnel outside the project staff, and it was not clear to the evaluation consultant why the problems seemed so resistant to solution. An example was the assignment at the school level of Project Assist aides to tasks which violated the objectives set forth in the project proposal. (See page 6-10, and 92).

In terms of factors solely within the province of the project management, the consultant gave a mixed report. On the positive side, project staff members seemed to be performing duties appropriate to their roles. Also, some functions which were lacking during the first part of the year, when the project was under-staffed, were present during the latter half. One such function was a systematic approach to management, (rather than a crisis-oriented one), with plans being formulated to overcome in the next project year some of the persistent problems which were experienced this year. On the negative side of the balance, one function which seemed to be clearly the responsibility of project management this year was reportedly never adequately performed, seemingly to the detriment of the program. This duty consisted of monitoring the implementation of the project on the school level, with the goal of catching and quickly resolving any problems. Several teachers interviewed by the consultant spontaneously commented that the greatest shortcoming of the project, in their opinion, was lack of program support to teachers in organizing the instructional process. (See pages 79, and 90-92).

A decision to re-fund this and other similar programs in Austin Independent School District in the future should be based on an appraisal of the probable effectiveness with which such funds can be expected to be managed. This judgment should be based in part on the effectiveness of this year's management, weighed against the factors beyond its control with which this year's management had to contend.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This year, recommendations will be made by appropriate administrative staff.

2. Should the program be evaluated?

RELEVANT FINDINGS:

Evidence in favor of Evaluation: If programs are to be held accountable for delivering the services and outcomes proposed, they should be evaluated. Input and process evaluation data provide information on how well a program is being implemented. In the formative stages of a program, this is the most vital type of evaluation information to collect, since studies of innovative programs indicate that program implementation is a complex process, requiring mutual adaptation between programs and their school settings.[1] Very often programs fail to be implemented at all, and program evaluations turn out to be evaluations of "non-events."[2]

This year, funding was not sufficient to provide for monitoring of classroom processes for Project Assist. Therefore, little information is available on what the aides actually did, or how well they did it. However, the outside consultants gathered important interview information on the degree of implementation of program components. For instance, it was reported that large portions of the Trilogy component were never implemented, that the curricula proposed for Project Read and Project Math were largely unimplemented, and that aide training was minimally implemented.

Summative evaluation data on program outcome objectives and evaluation questions provides information on whether the program achieves the goals set for it. Furthermore, having to report such information forces program planners to think in terms of desired outcomes, a pattern of thought perhaps not as automatic as one might suppose.

Having both types of evaluation data may give information on significant components which help a program achieve its goals or, when lacking, keep a program from achieving its goals. For instance, it was suggested by the first two years' evaluations of Project Assist that lack of sufficient teacher and aide training may have been a significant factor in the failure of Project Assist to ever meet its goals for improved student achievement.

Evidence against Evaluation: Because of the time required for designing instruments, administering them, analyzing data,

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[1] P. Berman, and M. McLaughlin. Implementation of educational innovation. The Educational Forum, 1976, 40 (3), 345-320.

[2] W. W. Charters and J.E. Jones. On the risk of appraising non-events in program evaluation. Educational Researcher, 1970, 2 (11), 5-7.

and writing up results, it is difficult to provide evaluation information that is both thorough and timely. For instance, since proposals for federal money must be submitted at mid-year of the year before funds are sought, evaluation information from the current year of ongoing programs is seldom available to help in this proposal planning process. Furthermore, results (especially negative ones) from the first year of a program's implementation are generally not considered conclusive. Therefore, there is an added year's lag time before unequivocal outcome information (based on two years' findings) is available during the project proposal writing phase. This means that projects may be funded for as many as three years before negative evaluation findings have a chance to influence project design. Even when two years' negative results are available before funds are actually received, school district staff responsible for writing of proposals and federal personnel responsible for review of proposals may be less than eager to consider revisions after preliminary approval has been given.

Such was the case with Project Assist this year. In February and March 1975, a proposal for 1975-76 whose major treatment was essentially like the one from the two previous years was written and submitted to the USOE. In April, word was received of approval of the project as proposed. In May and June, when 1974-75 outcome evaluation information began taking shape, the project's Evaluator informed project staff of the negative results and advised making a change in the proposed treatment for the coming year. Program staff indicated that commitments had been made to schools concerning the project for 1975-76, and therefore they did not want to make changes in the plans. Funding of the 1975-76 project was to have begun July 1, but was held up by the Office of Civil Rights based on district non-compliance with some of its regulations. Funds were not in fact finally released until the beginning of September. During the two-month hiatus between the June 30 end of funding for 1974-75 and the September release of funds, the Evaluator proposed to the USOE Program Officer and to Project Assist management that the proposal be altered. Again, the response was negative because of the trouble that such a change would have involved.

The solution to problems in the employment of evaluation information like the one outlined above is not readily apparent. However, it is a fact that over $900,000 in federal money was appropriated to Project Assist over a three year period, and the project never achieved its primary goal of improving student achievement in the project schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This year, recommendations will be made by the appropriate administrative staff.

III

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Historical Overview: Project Assist 1973-75

This year was Project Assist's third year of funding as an ESAA Pilot Project. From 1973-75 its purpose was to test the following hypothesis:

> Students who are in contact with teacher aides who have had specific training in the area of reading instruction, will learn to read better than students who are in contact with teacher aides who have had no reading training, and also better than students who are in contact with no teacher aides.

The 32 experimental aides received special preservice training in reading from program staff, as well as on-the-job training from teachers with whom they worked. Materials with which the aides worked were a key feature of the program. Instructional materials were selected by the faculties at the project schools.

The original design included three experimental schools which received specially trained Project Assist aides; three comparison schools which received general classroom aides; and four control schools which had no aides at all. The experimental schools during the first two years of the project were: Martin Junior High, grades 6-8, Metz Elementary, K-5, and Palm Elementary, K-5.

This Year's Program: Project Assist 1975-76

The program for 1975-76 was changed. Both the general aide and no aide controls were dropped from the design. The instructional aides and their training and materials used were again to be a major part of the design. However, several new components were added to the original one, which focused on improvement of reading skills and attitudes.

This year's proposal called for a math program parallel to the one already existing in reading to be installed in Martin Junior High School. There was also a component called Project Outreach which called for social work interns from the University of Texas to work with children referred because of behavioral or attitudinal problems. Trilogy was another new component, which employed a tri-ethnic school-community theatrical troupe to portray student-teacher situations in a satirical fashion to "illuminate pressures, problems, and positive encounters in a humanistic way." The components of

Project Assist for 1975-76 are described in detail later in this chapter.

Not only was the program content diversified, but the target schools for program implementation were changed. This year's target schools included all new schools on the elementary level: Sims, Oak Springs, and Rosewood, with grades K-5 receiving services. The junior high schools included Martin, which was continued as a project school from last year, and Allan, which received expanded services. As stated earlier, the control and comparison schools were dropped from the design.

Funding: ESAA III Pilot Project Assist was funded at $335,199. This was an increase from the 1974-75 funding level of $283,560 and the 1973-74 funding level of $297,798.

Table III-1: BREAK-DOWN OF FUNDING FOR PROJECT ASSIST COMPONENTS

Cost	Program Component
$ 28,567	Administrative
293,400	Reading and Math
10,056	Evaluation
1,750	Trilogy
1,426	Outreach
$ 335,199	Total

Funding for Project Assist can be roughly broken into five categories as shown in the table above. Approximately 7/8, or almost 90%, of the project budget was spent on the Reading and Math components. This amount, $293,400, includes $147,200 for instructional aide salaries and $98, 824 for instructional materials and hardware. In other words, $246,024 was physically present in the Project Assist classrooms. The salary and support costs of the Staff Development Coordinator are also included under Projects Read and Math since that position was limited by the project proposal to working with those components. In contrast, Project Assist received funding for Trilogy only for consultants and travel, the remainder being funded out of ESAA Basic. Project Outreach was operated by a University of Texas faculty member and Project Assist provided modest funding for intern travel, materials, and staff training.

Staff: The 1975-76 program design called for professional staff to include a Coordinator and a Staff Development Specialist; the paraprofessional staff was to include 32 instructional aides and 2 secretaries. Funding was also provided for a half-time evaluator, whose duties will be described in a later section of this report.

Project Components: There were several components to this year's project. The descriptions below reflect the components as they were described in the project proposal, rather than as they evolved over the course of the year.

Aides: As in years past, instructional aides once again formed a major part of the program's design. The goal in hiring the aides was to supplement the efforts of the teachers in providing individual assistance (in reading or math, as explained below) to [illegible]leving students, as well as in providing adult supervision.

The project proposal called for aides hired from the school neighborhood and/or minority groups, who would be extensively trained in specific subject areas, as well as in classroom management techniques. Training was also to focus on cultural awareness, human relations, and communication skills training, in order to promote close relationships among aides, teachers, and students. The training was to include intensive summer preservice training as well as a three-day training session immediately before the start of school, which would also be attended by the teachers. Once school was in session, training for aides and teachers was to continue throughout the school year.

It was specified in the proposal that the aides would perform only instructional (as opposed to clerical) duties. At the elementary level, they were to work only on reading tasks. At the junior high level, they were to work only on reading except at Martin, where they were also to work on math instructional tasks in support of Project Math, a subcomponent of the project.

Materials: Materials provided by Project Assist were also intended to be a major component of this year's program. Reading and mathematics materials were to be ordered for the Project Read and Project Math components described below.

Project Read: Project Read was to include aides and materials, as well as the following curriculum components: (1) "Reading is Fun-damental" was to be offered at the second or third grade level. Through this program, students were to be furnished with a minimum of four paperback books of their choice, which they would be allowed to take home and keep. (2) There was also to be an Oral Language Development component which was to use resource persons and materials to increase children's exposure to language learning situations. Materials were to include listening stations, books, tapes, records, and audio-visual materials. (3) The Language Experience Component was to provide children the chance to become "authors" by creating their own stories, either by dictating them to an adult or by writing them themselves. The stories could then be edited, further developing language skills. The students' stories were to reflect current topics in the various content areas. In social studies, Bicentennial

stories centering on the contributions of different ethnic groups were to be encouraged. (4) A Programmed Instruction component was also planned for those teachers who wanted their students to follow a carefully sequentialized course of study.

On the junior high level, it was proposed that reading instruction follow a laboratory approach. The reading labs were to have teaching machines; programmed reading instruction; comprehension, oral language, and language experience components. Language and phonics programs were also included.

Project Math: Project Math at Martin was to be designed around a math lab setting parallel to the Martin reading lab supported by ESAA funds from the previous two years. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students were to be served. The projected components were: (1) Readiness in Mathematics, to teach underachieving students basic math concepts by discovery. (2) The Computational Skills component was to use a programmed learning approach to teach computational skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and decimals. (3) The Problem Solving/Logic component was to apply computational skills to real life situations, using a graduated difficulty, programmed approach. (4) Modern Math, as described in the program proposal, was to emphasize student discovery of mathematical patterns. This component was to be implemented following completion of the computational program. (5) The Math in Life component was to feature classroom visits by business and civic leaders as well as high school and college students. The visitors were to emphasize the importance of math skills at higher educational levels, in the home, and in business.

Project Outreach: Project Outreach is the social work component of Project Assist. As part of this component, approximately ten graduate interns from the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work were to be placed in Project Assist schools to work with children referred by school personnel. Possible bases for referral were to include habitual truancy or classroom attitudinal or behavioral problems. The social work activities were to include work at individual, group, family, and organizational levels.

One of the social work activities proposed for the year was individual counseling for children having a hard time adjusting to the school setting. For very young children, it was anticipated that such help might include play therapy.

Some children were to be helped in groups of various types. Among them were cluster groups for scapegoated or withdrawn children, activity groups for children who need to see school more positively, discussion groups for children who need to develop verbal skills, and leadership training groups for children who need to have natural leadership ability channeled into more constructive activities.

Trilogy: Trilogy is a tri-ethnic theatrical troupe developed by the 1974-75 ESAA Community Liaison Program. It is composed of students, faculty, and staff of Austin Independent School District. Members of the troupe present original skits portraying students and teachers in various pressure-related situations. The portrayals are satirical in tone. The aim is to "illuminate pressures, problems, and positive encounters in a humanistic way."[1]

Plans for 1975-76 called for Trilogy to develop a teacher training model dealing specifically with classroom situations incident to Project Assist schools. This plan was to be developed with input from Trilogy consultants, Project Assist staff, and teachers. In addition to dealing with real classroom situations, the model was to focus on teachers' attitudes and actions in dealing with the skills and language and communication patterns of the students. Performances were to be held during preservice teacher training.

Performances were also proposed to be held quarterly at Project Assist schools and at least once for each Project Assist school PTA. Trilogy activities were intended to promote knowledge and appreciation for interracial and interethnic culture, history, and characteristics.

There were also plans to include students from Project Assist schools as Trilogy members this year. It was hoped that participation in such a troupe would improve interethnic attitudes and relationships for the members.

[1]From Trilogy description in amended 1975-76 ESAA III Pilot Project Proposal, Page 12.

B. CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

This section of an evaluation report from the Office of Research and Evaluation customarily reports on the events surrounding a project which happen prior to the start of the project or during its operation, which are outside the control of the project and which have an influence on the project's implementation or outcomes.

The factors discussed here are not presented as an exhaustive list of those which impacted Project Assist this year, but simply as a record of some of the major events which helped shape the project's course this year. Readers interested in finding out which events seemed significant to the Project Coordinator are referred to a list prepared by the Coordinator following the first process and management audit. The list is contained in section IV-C of this report.

One event which continued to have a major impact on the project throughout the year was the late release of federal funds for the project. According to the Project Coordinator, the delay was caused by the Austin Independent School District's non-compliance with regulations of the Office of Civil Rights. (See page 157 .) The chronology, reported by the contracted consultant, was as follows: Informal word on the approval of the project was received as early as June 1975. Formal approval was not received until August 1975, and funds were not released until September, (Minter, p. 110).

The lateness of funding for this project was particularly significant, since an important aspect of this year's project was training to be held for aides and teachers prior to the start of school. The funding delay also postponed the ordering of instructional materials, which was to have taken place in July and August. (Following the resignation of the previous Project Coordinator--see below--the new Coordinator made a decision to involve District Instructional Coordinators and Project Assist faculties in selection of this year's materials. This decision further delayed the ordering and hence the receipt of project materials.)

A second major event which had an impact on the project was the resignation of the Project Coordinator from the previous two years, on September 8, 1975. At that time, the Staff Development Coordinator took over as Acting Coordinator and continued to hold both positions until she was officially appointed as the new Project Coordinator in October. The new Staff Development Coordinator was not hired until January 19, 1976. This meant that one person was filling what were intended to be two positions for half of the project year.

A third element in the project's context had to do with the lack of a clearly defined responsibility for monitoring project implementation. In the past two years, the Office of Research and Evaluation had monitored processes in program implementation at the classroom level and

reported on them to project staff, and to others as appropriate. This year, the monitoring function of evaluation was not funded to evaluation, nor was it clearly assigned to one position, although the expectation seemed to be that the Project Coordinator and the Staff Development Coordinator should make occasional classroom observations as part of their duties. As reported by the outside consultant, however, classroom observations were almost nonexistent, and when made were focused solely on the instructional activities of the classroom instructional aide.

A final problem in the context of Project Assist this year, according to the contracted management auditor for the project, involved difficulties in high-level coordination between project staff and other district personnel with whom they had to interface in order to implement the project. One example of this problem was the assignment of Project Assist aides to non-reading and even non-instructional duties at several project schools. These duties, assigned by the project school teachers and principals, were apparently made in response to perceived school needs. However, they were counter to project proposal guidelines. The management of the project apparently lacked the authority to enforce school conformance with project guidelines, although they themselves felt they were to be held accountable for failure to meet the guidelines.

The last problem is a complex one, involving relationships between district personnel who function at different levels and in different capacities in the district. On the one hand, principals (and teachers) serve the district as part of a line chain of command. They are entrusted with responsibility for the major work of the schools: instruction of students. On the other hand, special program staff (like Project Assist management) serve the schools in a staff capacity. Their function is to support existing instructional services. However, they also perceive that their role includes enforcing the federal guidelines and proposal plans which the schools and the district administration agreed to follow when accepting federal project monies. They feel responsible to the funding agency (and are made to feel so by the federal program officer). Very often, impasses are reached between project management and school personnel when project guidelines seem to conflict with needs perceived by school personnel.

Seemingly, what is needed to remedy problems such as the one cited above, which reportedly did occur in Project Assist to some degree this year, is an in-district mechanism for communicating and enforcing such guidelines, and a commitment to do so. At least two solutions to this problem appear possible. One solution would be for project staff to communicate deviations from guidelines to their superiors, who in turn should follow the appropriate upward and downward communication channels linking staff and line personnel, in trying to resolve such problems. This recommendation assumes and requires the cooperation of higher level staff and line personnel in resolving discrepancies in the goals and

priorities of the personnel below them. The unifying goal should be to work toward providing improved educational experiences for the students involved.

The other possible solution is for the district to simply not write federal proposals which do not meet campus-level needs and which, in fact, sometimes create on-campus problems. This solution could perhaps be carried out by involving principals and teachers more in the writing of proposals to fund projects on their campuses.

The above alternatives are not intended to specify what course of action should be followed, but are offered as thoughts concerning a difficult problem which district decision-makers must address.

C. EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

Historical Overview: Project Assist Evaluation 1973-75

The evaluation done by the Office of Research and Evaluation for the first two years of Project Assist was an extensive one. Information relevant to outcome, process, and input objectives was collected and reported. The evaluation staff of Project Assist consisted of four full-time employees: one project evaluator, two process evaluators, and one secretary. Funding for evaluating Project was $51,992 in 1973-74 and $42,812 in 1974-75.

1975-76 Evaluation

Funding and Personnel: The evaluation for 1975-76 is much less extensive than that done in the two previous years, since funding for evaluation was cut considerably by the USOE negotiators. This year, only $10,056 was provided for evaluation of the project. Of this amount, $3500 was allotted to pay outside consultants to perform management and process audits. An additional $5000 was allocated to pay the salary of a half-time intern to collect, analyze, and report outcome information; as well as hire and coordinate the work of the outside consultants. The remainder of the funds were designated to cover the cost of office supplies, data analysis, xeroxing, and reproduction of the Final and Technical reports.

Evaluation Design: The Evaluation Design was drafted in September and October 1975, by the Project Assist evaluation intern, with input from other Office of Research and Evaluation staff members as well as the Coordinator of Project Assist. The design included an Evaluation Timeline, a series of outcome objectives on which information was to be collected, and a small number of decision questions which seemed appropriate to this year's continuation of the program.

Evaluation Timeline: The Evaluation Timeline was revised several times during the year, to reflect more realistic estimates of the time required to accomplish evaluation activities. Computer processing of data, in particular, was found to require considerably more time than had been anticipated. A copy of the revised Timeline is included as Figure III-1 in this section of the report.

Outcome Objectives: Each of the components of Project Assist had one or more outcome objectives on which information was collected. For Project Read and Project Math, there was an analysis of achievement data in those subjects, using the Reading and Math subtests of the California Achievement Test as the criterion measures. Data were also collected on changes

in math attitudes for the Math component, as well as teacher ratings of success of the Outreach component. The evaluation design also called for information to be gathered on changes in ethnic attitudes for Project Assist students participating in Trilogy. However, this aspect of the Trilogy component was not implemented, so this information was not collected. The specific objectives and their degree of achievement are reported in Chapter IV of this report.

Decision Questions: Although a small number of decision questions were included in the design, input and process information concerning program implementation vital to answering such questions was not collected by the Office of Research and Evaluation and must be gleaned from the reports submitted by the outside contracted auditors. The decision questions and relevant outcome data collected by the Office of Research and Evaluation, plus information on implementation reported by the outside consultants, are presented in Chapter II of this report.

Evaluation Instruments: A variety of instruments were used to collect the outcome evaluation information for Project Assist. A standardized test, the California Achievement Test, was used to collect information on achievement in reading and math. Math attitudes were sampled with Fall and Spring administrations of the Math Attitude Test which was developed in a previous year by the Office of Research and Evaluation. Short questionnaires using Likert scales and open-ended questions were developed by the Project Assist evaluator to collect information for the Trilogy and Project Outreach components. A careful search was also conducted for instruments suitable for measuring changes in ethnic attitudes, in anticipation of Project Assist student involvement in Trilogy. Although this component of the program was not implemented this year, the measures found, which were recommended by Dr. Walter Stephan at the University of Texas, may be employed if this component is implemented in the future.

Copies of the instruments used, along with a technical appraisal of their reliability and validity and the conditions surrounding their administration are available in the 1975-76 Project Assist Technical Report on file at the Office of Research and Evaluation. The Technical Report also contains a detailed analysis of the results for each instrument.

Outside Consultants: As was mentioned earlier, input and process information for Project Assist was supplied by outside consultants this year. The Office of Research and Evaluation had the responsibility of contracting with the consultants for their service. A decision was made to divide Program components in such a way that one consultant would report on the academic components: Project Read and Project Math as well as provide a management audit. A second consultant was contracted to do the process audits on the human relations

components: Project Outreach and Trilogy. Dr. LaVor Lym of the Dallas Independent School District evaluation office was hired to do the academic and management audit. Mrs. Mary Minter, a graduate student in educational psychology who has had experience with school and Federal programs, was hired to do the human relations audit.

The consultants' reports were made on the basis of site visits, with approximately three days per visit devoted to visiting Project Assist schools and interviewing project personnel at different levels. Each consultant conducted two site visits: one in January and one in April. Following their visits, each submitted a report to the Office of Research and Evaluation, on the degree of implementation of the respective Project Assist components. The Office of Research and Evaluation took responsibility for subsequent release of the reports.

The consultants' reports are included in a separate section of the Final Report.

1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE - REVISED 1/76 and 6/76

Activity	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
1. Meet with Jetta & Dan Robertson Re: Trilogy Objectives	16-25								
2. Search for recent ethnic attitudes test for Trilogy (this is for probable objective)	16-25								
3. Administer MAT pretest, Martin	20-22								
4. Meet with USOE Official	28-29								
5. Handcheck & machine score MAT pretests	X	X							
6. Meet with Freda and new evaluator- concerning audits		X							
7. Select or develop appropriate tests for Trilogy component			X	X					
8. Do TESTAT on MAT pretests		X		X					
9. Hire and begin consulting with Process and Management Auditors				X	X				
10. Feedback MAT pre-data				13-21					
11. Read ESAA Basic Evaluation Contract Proposals 1975-76				8-12					
12. First human relations process audit				19-30					
13. Decision on hiring third auditor for management and program overview				19-23					
14. Review ESAA pilot objectives & write evaluation design for 1976-1977				19-23					

Figure III-1: 1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE. (Page 1 of 4)

1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE - REVISED 1/76 and 6/76

Activity	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
15. Prepare Trilogy audience impact questions				19-23					
16. Administer Trilogy audience impact questionnaire at Martin				27					
17. First reading and math process and management audit				27-29					
18. Code results from Martin Trilogy responses				X——	X				
19. Meet with Freda & Ann to organize their intern seminar presentation					4				
20. Consult w/ Project Outreach Coordinator re Component evaluation & Project Outreach questionnaire					X				
21. Freda & Ann Intern Seminar-The Politics of Evaluation					18				
22. CAT administered in junior high schools					9-13				
23. Interview Project Outreach interns re activities, referral process, students served, etc.						X———	X		
24. Consult w/ Project Assist Coordinator on possible impact of & responses to outside consultant reports						X——	X		
25. Consult with Project Outreach coordinator re her (internal) evaluation of Project Outreach services						X—	X		

Figure III-1: 1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE. (Page 2 of 4)

1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE - REVISED 1/76 and 6/76

Activity	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
26. Release of evaluation consultants' first process & management reports							7		
27. Finalize Project Outreach Post-Questionnaire							X—X		
28. California Achievement Tests administered in elementary schools							5-16		
29. Notify Mr. Olivares of MAT Posttest in writing							2		
30. Project Outreach Post-Questionnaire to teachers							26		
31. Project Outreach Post-Questionnaires returned							X——X		
32. Administer MAT Posttests							20-23		
33. Prepare MAT answer sheets for computer analysis							X X		
34. Final Process and Management audits: (human relations + rdg, math, & mgmt							X——X		
35. Follow-up Memo sent on Project Outreach Questionnaire								3	
36. Help prepare CAT data for analysis								X—X	
37. Attend Evaluation In-service meetings on preparation of Final Reports								5-12	
38. Administer Trilogy audience impact questionnaire at Rosewood								6	

Figure III-1: 1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE. (Page 3 of 4)

1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE - REVISED 1/76 and 6/76

Activity	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
39. Set up account to print Final Report at Quick Print								X	
40. Analyze Project Outreach Post-Questionnaire Results								X—X	
41. Analyze results of Trilogy audience impact questionnaire								X—X	
42. Compile CAT data for Project Assist students								X	
43. Write Instrument Reports for inclusion in Technical Report									X
44. Input from ORE staff and Project Assist Coordinator on Technical and Final Report contents.									X———X
45. Print & assemble Technical Report									21-25
46. Write Final Report									X———X
47. Print & assemble Final Report									29-30

Figure III-1: 1975-76 PROJECT ASSIST EVALUATION TIMELINE. (Page 4 of 4)

IV

EVALUATION FINDINGS

A. OBJECTIVES

1. (OUTCOME) Improved reading achievement. By the end of the instructional period (September 1975-May 1976), the number of students reading on grade level in grades 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 in project schools will be as follows:

School	Grade	% Reading on Grade Level
Oak Springs	2	27%
Rosewood	4	11%
Sims	2	46%
	4	33%
Martin	6	16%
	7	18%
	8	18%
Allan	6	17%
	7	16%
	8	19%

Each of the percentages listed above is an increase of ten percent over the number of students reading on grade level in February, 1975. The criterion measure in both 1975 and 1976 will be the Reading Subtests of the California Achievement Test.

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: Not achieved.

Reading scores met the criterion of ten percentage points' gain in only two of the ten grades checked. The scores which reached criterion were second grade scores at Oak Springs and fourth grade scores at Rosewood. Scores in two other grades also improved, but not by ten percentage points. Scores in 3 grades were lower the last year, and in 3 others scores remained the same.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

California Achievement Test

The reading subtest of the California Achievement Test (CAT) was used to measure reading achievement of students in grades 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 at all Project Assist schools. As shown in Table IV-1 below, reading scores in four of the grades at Project Assist schools were higher than last year; scores in three grades were lower; and in three grades the scores remained the same. Rosewood and Oak Springs students' scores showed the greatest gain as compared to last year. Fourth graders at Rosewood, who scored 16 percentage points higher than last year's results, were the only students who clearly met the criterion of 10 percentage points' gain. Second graders at Oak Springs were within one percentage point of achieving 10 points' gain, so their scores were also given credit for reaching criterion. None of the other grades and schools checked reached the ten-point criterion. Second grade scores at Sims were up from last year, but fourth grade scores were down. Sixth and eighth grade reading scores were down at Allan and seventh grade scores were up. Scores in all grades at Martin remained at the same level as last year.

Table IV-1: COMPARISON OF STUDENTS READING ON GRADE LEVEL IN PROJECT ASSIST SCHOOLS IN 1975-76, WITH THOSE IN 1974-75, AND WITH CRITERION SCORES.

		Percent on Grade Level				
School	Grade	1975-76 Scores	1974-75 Scores	Gain (+) or Loss (-)	1975-76 Criterion	Criterion Achieved?
Oak Springs	2	26%	17%	+ 9%	27%	Yes (†)
Rosewood	4	17%	1%	+16%	11%	Yes
Sims	2	40%	36%	+ 4%	46%	No
	4	13%	23%	-10%	33%	No
Martin	6	6%	6%	Same	16%	No
	7	8%	8%	Same	18%	No
	8	8%	8%	Same	18%	No
Allan	6	3%	7%	- 4%	17%	No
	7	13%	6%	+ 7%	16%	No
	8	6%	9%	- 3%	19%	No

The outside consultant hired to report on implementation of Project Read found that while instructional aides were generally in the classrooms to help with reading as planned, the reading curriculum outlined in the Project Assist proposal was not implemented this year, except in the Reading Labs at Martin. He therefore cautioned that the outcome evaluation could test for the effect of instructional aides plus special curriculum only for the students in those labs. Therefore, results for those students should be reported separately.

The teacher in charge of the Martin labs reported that this year, all sixth and seventh graders at Martin participated in the labs. No eighth graders participated.

The results for Martin sixth and seventh grade Reading Lab participants are contained in the preceding table. As can be seen, the participation in the Reading Lab plus contact with the instructional aides was not sufficient to help these students score higher than students in the same grades at Martin last year.

2. (OUTCOME) Improved Math Achievement. By the end of the instructional period (September 1975-May 1976), the following percentages of students in grades 6, 7, and 8 at Martin will be working on grade level in math as measured by a late Spring 1976 administration of the Math Subtests of the California Achievement Test (CAT).

Grade	% on Grade Level in Math
6	12%
7	19%
8	25%

Each of the percentages listed above is an increase of ten percent over the number of students doing math on grade level in February, 1975, as measured by the Math Subtest of the California Achievement Test (CAT).

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: Not achieved.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

California Achievement Test

The math subtest of the California Achievement Test was used to measured math achievement for students in Project Assist math classes (grades 6, 7, and 8) at Martin Junior High.

As shown in Table IV-2 below, math scores at Martin were not improved this year. The percentage of sixth grade students working on grade level remained the same this year as last year, while the percentage of seventh and eighth graders on grade level dropped. Therefore, none of the grade level scores met the criterion set for this year.

Table IV-2: COMPARISON OF PROJECT ASSIST STUDENTS WORKING ON GRADE LEVEL IN MATH AT MARTIN IN 1975-76, WITH MARTIN STUDENTS WORKING ON GRADE LEVEL IN MATH IN 1974-75, AND WITH MATH CRITERION SCORES.

	Percent on Grade Level				
Grade	1975-76 Scores	1974-75 Scores	Gain (+) or Loss (-)	1975-76 Criterion	Criterion Achieved?
6	2%	2%	Same	12%	No
7	2%	9%	- 7%	19%	No
8	4%	15%	-11%	25%	No

3. (OUTCOME) Improved student math attitude. The mean score on the Math Attitude Test for students in grades 6-8 at Martin will be significantly higher on a Spring post-test than the mean score for students in grades 6-8 at Martin on a Fall pre-test.

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: Not achieved.

The possible range of scores on the MAT was from 0 to 17, with 0 representing the most negative response possible and 17 representing the most positive response possible. The average pre-test score for this sample was 10.8. The average post-test score was 11.0. There is no significant difference in these scores; therefore, the objective was not achieved.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

Math Attitude Test

The Math Attitude Test (MAT) was given to Project Assist math students at Martin to help determine whether the presence of Project Assist aides and curriculum helped improve student attitudes toward mathematics and their math classes. The MAT was given early and late in the year in a rough approximation of a pre- post- administration scheme. Slightly over 500 students were in Project Assist math classes and therefore were eligible to take the MAT. However, because of student absences at the time of testing, only 384 students had valid scores for both pre- and post-tests. The results reported here reflect only those students' scores.

Possible scores on the MAT range from 0 to 17, with 0 representing the most negative response possible, and 17 the most positive response possible. The average pre-test score for Project Assist students was 10.8; the average post-test score was 11.0. Not surprisingly, the test for significant gain indicated that there is no significant difference in these scores. (The probability of such scores occurring by chance alone was calculated to be .4821, or approximately 48 times in 100, well over the five or fewer times in 100 that would be required for the difference to be considered significant.)

4. (OUTCOME) Audience (faculty and parent) awareness of Trilogy goals. The majority of faculty and parents sampled from Trilogy audiences will be able to name correctly at least one major goal of Trilogy, based on viewing a production by the group.

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: Achieved.

Trilogy did not perform for Project Assist parents. However, performances at Martin and Rosewood were attended by Project Assist faculty and Staff. Out of 15 questionnaires returned following the Martin performance, 11 respondents correctly identified one or more major Trilogy goals. Out of 46 questionnaires returned following the Rosewood performance, 39 correctly identified major Trilogy goals. From both performances, 50 out of 61 questionnaires, or 83%, gave correct responses.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

Trilogy did not perform for audiences consisting primarily of Project Assist students' parents, as had been planned. However, two performances were held at Project Assist schools. One performance, held at Martin Junior High in January, was attended by the faculty and students. A second performance, held at Rosewood Elementary in May, was attended by faculty and staff from the project elementary schools: Rosewood, Oak Springs, and Sims.

Teachers and other school personnel who viewed the Trilogy performances were asked to name what they thought to be the major goals of Trilogy. The purpose of the question was to find out how effectively the actual Trilogy performances succeeded in getting across the key ideas of the people who planned them. A content analysis was performed on the responses to this open-ended question. The respondents' answers were compared to a summary of major Trilogy goals prepared by the Project Assist evaluator on the basis of interviews with the Project Assist and Trilogy Coordinators. On the basis of this comparison, a decision was made as to which respondents were able to correctly identify one or more major goals of Trilogy. Out of 15 questionnaires returned following the Martin performance, 11 respondents correctly identified one or more major Trilogy goals. Out of 46 questionnaires returned following the Rosewood performance, 39 correctly identified major Trilogy goals. From both performances, 50 out of 61 questionnaires, or 83%, gave correct responses.

Table IV-3 gives a detailed analysis of the goals the school personnel saw as central to Trilogy, based on viewing a performance by the troupe. Correct responses fell into the following general categories. Many respondents felt that a major goal of Trilogy is to facilitate understanding and communication among various school subgroups (such as teachers, parents, and students, or members of different ethnic groups) by making them more aware of one another's point of view. Other people felt the major emphasis of Trilogy is to demonstrate the universality of human nature ("We are all people with problems") by helping viewers switch perspective so that they see the motivations behind the actions of others as well as how their own actions appear to others. Some people felt Trilogy had the more general goal of presenting for scrutiny some of the problems existing in school and society today. Other people alluded to the use of humor in confronting problems or the importance of open confrontation and teamwork in the solution of problems.

Table IV-3: ANALYSIS OF AUDIENCE LISTINGS OF TRILOGY GOALS

1. Based on today's performance, what do you believe the members of Trilogy are trying to accomplish? (What are the major goals of Trilogy?)

CORRECT	Martin Performance	Rosewood Performance	Total
1. Increase understanding and improve relationships among members of different ethnic groups.	1	11	12
2. Increase understanding and improve relationships among teachers, students, and parents.	6	11	17
3. Demonstrate the universality of human nature and help viewers switch perspective--see self through others' eyes and understand motivations of others.	3	9	12
4. Present problems existing in school and society today.	2	9	11
5. Use humor to confront problems and provoke thought.	1	3	4
6. Confront problems openly and work together toward solution.	3	3	6
INCORRECT			
No Answer	0	2	2
Other: e.g., get students to see how they really act in the classroom; communicate and entertain (vague); awareness of problems (vague), etc.	4	5	9
SUMMARY			
Number of questionnaires with 1 or more correct Trilogy goals.	11	39	50
Number with no correct response.	4	7	11
Total	15	46	61

A minority of the school personnel who filled out questionnaires on the two Trilogy performances at Project Assist schools were unable to correctly and clearly identify Trilogy goals. Two people failed to answer the question. One or two seemed to have misunderstood the purpose. (One person felt a major goal was "to get the students to see how they really act in the classroom."). And several people gave answers that were too vague to demonstrate an understanding of Trilogy goals (e.g. "communicate and entertain").

5. (OUTCOME) Audience (faculty and parent) evaluation of Trilogy effectiveness in meeting goals.

The majority of faculty and parents sampled from Trilogy audiences will, when listing Trilogy objectives, say that the group is meeting those objectives effectively.

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: Achieved.

Trilogy did not perform for Project Assist parents. However, performances at Martin and Rosewood were attended by Project Assist faculty and staff. At the performances, the majority of the people who filled out questionnaires (53% at Martin and 84% at Rosewood) indicated that they felt the members of Trilogy were meeting their goals very effectively. An additional 33% of the Martin audience felt Trilogy members were meeting their goals somewhat effectively. These responses make it clear that this objective was achieved.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

Trilogy did not perform for audiences consisting primarily of Project Assist students' parents, as had been planned. However, two performances were held at Project Assist schools. One performance held at Martin Junior High in January, was attended by faculty and students. A second performance, held at Rosewood Elementary in May was attended by faculty and staff from the project elementary schools: Rosewood, Oak Springs, and Sims.

The teachers, aides, and administrators who viewed the Martin and Rosewood performances were asked how effectively they felt Trilogy members were meeting their goals. The responses from both groups, which are summarized in Table IV-4, were overwhelmingly positive.

Table IV-4: RATINGS OF TRILOGY EFFECTIVENESS IN MEETING GOALS

2. How effectively are they meeting these goals, in your opinion? (Circle)

	1 Very Effectively	2 Somewhat Effectively	3 Neutral	4 Somewhat Ineffectively	5 Very Ineffectively	Total
Martin	8 (53%)	5 (33%)	2 (13%)	0	0	15
Rosewood	37 (84%)	3 (7%)	3 (7%)	0	1 (?) (2%)*	44
Total	45 (76%)	8 (14%)	5 (9%)	0	1 (?) (2%)*	59

*As explained in the text, there is some doubt as to whether this response was intended to be recorded as very ineffectively. The person may have intended to mark 'very effectively.'

Fifty-three percent of the people at Martin felt the goals were being met very effectively, 33% felt they were being met somewhat effectively, and 14% (two people) registered their feelings as neutral. People who viewed the performance at Rosewood were even more enthusiastic, with 84% saying they felt the group to be meeting their goals very effectively. Seven percent said they felt the goals to be met somewhat effectively and another 7% claimed to be neutral. A total of three people marked "very ineffectively" in responding to this question. From other comments on their questionnaires, it was obvious that two of these people meant "very effectively," and their responses were recorded as such. The third person's questionnaire was more difficult to interpret, so that response was recorded as marked, although it is entirely possible that it was intended to be recorded as "very effectively." Even allowing for this one possible negative response and discounting for people's tendency to answer somewhat more positively on such questions than their real feelings would warrant, it can be said that people polled definitely felt the Trilogy troupe was pursuing its goals in an effective manner.

6. (OUTCOME) Increased interethnic social contact and more positive interethnic attitudes. At least 50% of Trilogy participants will score significantly higher on a late Spring 1976 administration of instruments measuring interethnic attitudes and interethnic contact than on administration of the same instruments at the time of the group's formation in early February.

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: No data were collected relevant to this objective.

Plans for beginning a Trilogy troupe composed of Project Assist students were not implemented this year. Therefore, no information was collected on attitude change in Project Assist Trilogy participants.

7. (OUTCOME) Improvement of students referred for social services, as judged by teachers.

At least 1/3 of the students who have been served by Project Outreach will have improved in the areas for which they were referred, as rated by teachers in a questionnaire administered in late Spring.

LEVEL OF ATTAINMENT: Achieved.

Approximately half (49%) of the referred students were described as currently improved compared to their behavior at the time of referral. A slightly smaller but sizeable percentage of students served early in the year (41%) were described as showing immediate improvement. Approximately two-thirds of the people queried believed the interns had been helpful, regardless of whether they felt the specific student on whom they were reporting had improved. The percentage of respondents who credited the interns with a positive impact was even higher among the people who had seen definite improvement in the referred students. Within this subgroup, 85% saw the interns as helping promote the positive changes observed.

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

Project Outreach Questionnaire

The Project Outreach questionnaire was designed to find out if faculty members saw students referred to Project Outreach as improved, and if they saw the social work interns as contributing to any improvement seen. The findings for the major questions are summarized in the tables and text which follow.

Table IV-5: FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS' CURRENT PERFORMANCE AT TIME OF REFERRAL.

1. How would you describe the student's current performance in that (referred) area, compared to his/her performance at the time of referral?

Current Performance	Allan	Martin	Rosewood	Sims	Total
1. Very much worse	2	0	0	0	2 (2%)
2. Somewhat worse	2	1	4	0	7 (8%)
3. About the same	6	6	20	2	34 (39%)
4. Somewhat improved	4	6	12	6	28 (32%)
5. Very much improved	5	3	3	4	15 (17%)
6. Don't know	1	1	0	0	2 (2%)
Total	20	17	39	12	88

The information in the table above indicates that 9 out of 88 students, or about 10% of the sample, were considered to be worse at the time the questionnaire was sent than at the time of referral. Thirty-four students, or about 39% were perceived to be about the same. And 43 students, or almost half the sample (49%) were considered to be improved. The current status of two students was unknown.

Table IV-6: FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF TEMPORARY CHANGES IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE DURING AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER TREATMENT.

2. Some students received help early in the year, and it is possible that there was a <u>temporary</u> change in their behavior which has since disappeared. If this student was helped by the social work interns in the <u>Fall</u>, how would you describe his/her performance <u>during and immediately following contact with the social work interns</u>, compared to his/her performance at the time of referral?

Immediate Performance	Allen	Martin	Rosewood	Sims	Total
1. Very much worse	0	0	0	0	0
2. Somewhat worse	1	0	1	0	2 (3%)
3. About the same	6	2	18	4	30 (45%)
4. Somewhat improved	6	4	6	3	19 (28%)
5. Very much improved	2	1	1	3	9 (13%)
6. Don't know	3	4	0	0	7 (10%)
Total	18	11	28	10	67

The results presented above indicate that only 2 students, or 3% of the 67 served in the Fall, were perceived as worse during and immediately after treatment. Thirty students, or 45% of the sample were seen as remaining the same. Twenty-eight students, 41% of the total group, were perceived as showing some degree of improvement during and immediately after treatment. The immediate effects of treatment were unknown for seven students, who constituted 10% of the sample.

Table IV-7: FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK INTERNS' HELPFULNESS IN WORKING WITH REFERRED STUDENTS.

3. If you saw a change for the better in this student's behavior, do you believe the work of the social work interns helped cause the change?

Did the interns help?	Allan	Martin	Rosewood	Sims	Total
1. Definitely yes--the interns helped the student a lot.	2	2	4	2	10 (13%)
2. Probably yes--the interns seemed to help somewhat	7	7	17	8	39 (52%)
3. Don't know	5	7	7	1	20 (27%)
4. Probably no--the interns had little positive influence	3	0	2	0	5 (7%)
5. Definitely no--the interns' work interfered with the progress that was made	0	0	1	0	1 (1%)
Total	17	16	31	11	75

A total of 75 people from the four schools responded to this question. Forty-nine people, or 65% of the total sample believed the interns had helped to cause whatever positive changes were noted in the students served. Six people, or 8% of the sample felt the interns had little positive influence, or in one case, actually interfered with whatever progress was made. Twenty people, or 27% of the sample, stated that they did not know whether the interns had contributed toward any improvement that was noted.

A more complete analysis of these major results, as well as the interrelationships between responses to the different questions is presented in Appendix C of the Technical Report. However, the above information clearly indicates that this objective was met.

Process and Input Objectives

No information was collected by the Office of Research and Evaluation on process and input objectives for Project Assist this year. Instead, outside consultants were hired to report on the various aspects of program implementation. The reader is referred to section IV-C of this report, in which the consultants' reports are contained, for this information.

B. INTERRELATIONSHIPS

This section of an evaluation report is intended to tie together information on the relationships between program inputs, processes, and outcomes. Since a given program is only one of many elements impinging on schools at any given point in time, the relationships between program activities and student outcomes are always somewhat speculative. Since the information collected on the implementation and outcomes of Project Assist this year was extremely limited, with no observations made of actual classroom processes, trying to tie together the separate pieces of information on program implementation and outcomes is even more speculative. Therefore, the following ideas are presented as food for thought only.

Project Read and Project Math

Instructional aides were the key aspects of these components. The major goal in employing them was to enable schools to provide more individualized academic supervision (in reading and math) for students, and thereby increase student achievement in these skill areas. The data collected by the evaluation consultant indicate that aides this year received little training from program staff, and teachers received no training. Outcome information showed improved achievement which met the criterion set in only two of ten grades on which data were collected. Achievement in other grades remained about the same or dropped. No observational information is available to verify what the aides did in classrooms, and how well they did it. But interview data indicate that with some notable exceptions, aides worked instructionally, generally in reading (or math) or reading related areas, and that teachers saw them as differing in ability and employed them accordingly. The consultant report also indicated that some teachers spontaneously commented that their greatest criticism of the project was based on a lack of support in planning and implementing instructional experiences.

One temptimg hypothesis based on the above information is that the scarcity of aide training and the general lack of help given to teachers in using the aides to maximum advantage may have contributed to the lack of program impact on achievement. This idea is supported by findings from more thorough evaluations of Project Assist in previous years. In those years, it was determined that the program was generally implemented as planned, with the exception that, just as in 1975-76, little inservice training was given to aides on reading instruction and little preschool or inservice training was given to teachers on the utilization of aides. However, the training provided was seemingly more systematic and thorough than that offered in 1975-76. One specific finding from the 1974-75 evaluation was that trained instructional aides contributed to increased individualization and untrained instructional aides to decreased individualization in the

classroom, (1974-75 Final Report; ESAA Pilot Project Assist, page 3). More generally, it was found that instructional aides failed to improve student achievement in the program's two previous years. Teachers indicated through questionnaire responses that they saw a great need for further training for aides in classroom management techniques and instructional methods, (1974-75 Final Report, page 4). Teachers and principals also voiced the opinion that training in utilization of aides and materials had only partially met their needs (1974-75 Final Report, page 8). Teachers indicated a desire to see more of the program staff in the schools (1974-75 Final Report, pages 50-55).

This evidence suggests that any future programs attempting to use instructional aides to improve student academic achievement should emphasize aide training in instruction and classroom management and teacher training in effective utilization of aides.

Project Focus

A different kind of interrelationship that is suggested by this year's Project Assist has to do with the lack of coherence in the Project components and objectives. The instructional components (Project Read and Project Math) and the human relations components (Project Outreach and Trilogy) were not logically related to one another in terms of their focus, type of treatment, or goals. Even within Project Read and Project Math, there was a division in project focus and resources, with both instructional aides and instructional materials proposed as major aspects of these components. This diversity in Project Components made the Project more difficult to administer than it would have been otherwise, and may have kept the Project management from giving concentrated attention to any one program aspect. This problem, in turn, may have diluted the impact of this year's project.

C. CONSULTANT REPORTS ON PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Since evaluation funding for Project Assist this year was insufficient to conduct the type of comprehensive input and process evaluation customarily done by ORE, a decision was made to contract with outside consultants to conduct process and management audits of the project.

Rationale: The rationale for this decision was two-fold. On the one hand, it was felt that the information which could be gathered at the given level of funding would necessarily be incomplete and the district's Office of Research and Evaluation would begin to lose credibility if it seemingly gave endorsement to such limited methods by conducting the evaluation itself. A second reason for hiring outsiders was that because of the need to sample and to draw inferences based on a small amount of information, interview data is highly subject to bias. Since district personnel like Evaluators from the Office of Research and Evaluation may have developed biases concerning district programs and issues, it was felt that a fresh perspective would be an asset in the preparation of these reports.

Method: The Office of Research and Evaluation contracted with two consultants to audit the implementation and the management of Project Assist. The first consultant was responsible for investigating implementation of the Project's instructional components, Project Read and Project Math, as well as conducting a management audit. The second consultant was asked to report on implementation of the human relations components, Trilogy and Project Outreach. Dr. C. LaVor Lym, a Senior Evaluator from the Dallas Independent School District was hired to do the instructional and management audits. Mrs. Mary Minter, a doctoral student in educational psychology at the University of Texas who has had experience working with federal and school programs was hired to do the human relations audits.

Each consultant made two audits, one in January and one in late April/early May. Each audit included approximately three days devoted to visiting project schools and interviewing project personnel from different levels. Some records providing information on components were also examined.

The reports enclosed in this section contain the consultants' findings. In all, there are four reports, one submitted to the Office of Research and Evaluation by each consultant following each audit.

The consultants' first reports have been released previously to District personnel directly involved with Project Assist.

Limitations of the Method Used: The major limitation to the method used in gathering process data for Project Assist this year is that the amount of data collected is necessarily so small. It is entirely possible that important information, available at different times from those chosen for the audits or from people not interviewed, was missed.

A second problem has to do with the nature of the information collected. Although some program records were examined by the auditor for the human relations components, most of the information used came from interviews. While this method allows for fairly quick and thorough collection of a wide variety of information, it is limited by the fact that it is based on people's perceptions of events. More faith could have been placed in the information reported if time (and money) had been available for systematic observations of program activities.

A third limitation of the auditing method as employed this year for Project Assist, was the lateness of the first audit and hence the receipt of the first consultant reports. The Project Coordinator voiced the opinion that the information reported would have been more useful to her had the first audit been conducted in late October. The final audit, which occurred in late April/early May was, in her opinion, better timed. Perhaps a more adequate design would have included three audits: one in late October, one in late January, and one in late April.

A final limitation of this method is related to one of the advantages mentioned earlier: the fact that the consultants reporting on Project Assist were outsiders to the Austin Independent School District. While they were undoubtedly less biased than district personnel, there was also the feeling among some of the people associated with Project Assist that the consultants may have lacked an in-depth understanding of the context in which Project Assist operated this year. Following in-house release of the first management and instructional process audit report, this belief prompted the Project Assist Coordinator to distribute a memo to those reading the report. In the memo, she detailed events surrounding the project and made recommendations for the remainder of the year. That memo is enclosed in this section of the report, along with a brief memo responding to it addressed to the Superintendent from the Coordinator of the Office of Research and Evaluation.

The reports and memos follow.

Process Evaluation and Management Audit of ESAA Project Assist in the Austin Independent School District: January, 1976, Findings

by

C. LaVor Lym

and

Thomas G. Krueck

Introduction

This report presents the findings of a process evaluation of the reading and mathematics components of Project Assist, an ESAA Pilot Project funded in the Austin Independent School District (AISD), Austin, Texas, during 1975-76. Also included is information related to a "management audit" of the Project. The findings which are presented reflect the evaluators' assessments as made in the last week of January, 1976. The personnel who conducted the process evaluation and management audit were agents external to the AISD whose services were contracted in accordance with the proposal for the Project.

Description of Project Assist. Prior to a three-day visit to the AISD the only information which the evaluators received concerning Project Assist was a copy of the Project proposal and an abstract of the Project titled "Program Summary of ESAA Project Assist." All other knowledge of the Project was gained by the evaluators during their visit to the AISD.

Project Assist was described as an ESAA funded program which was in its third year of operation in the AISD. The elementary schools participating in the Project during 1975-76 had not been involved in the Project in the past. They were Sims, Oak Springs, and Rosewood. Those junior high schools served by the Project were Martin, which had been involved the previous two years, and Allan, whose past involvement was as a comparison site for Martin.

The Project was designed to provide to participating schools the services of 32 instructional aides, innovative curricula in reading (also in mathematics at Martin), materials and equipment to support the curricula, a school-community social work component called Outreach, and an innovative

interracial component called Trilogy. Aides were to meet specific qualification requirements for employment, were to receive preservice and inservice training for the reading or mathematics curriculum to be employed by Project schools, were to participate in inservice training with teachers, and were to have duties and responsibilities limited to reading instruction (or, at Martin, mathematics instruction). The reading curriculum for the elementary schools was to be comprised of the following components: Reading is Fundamental, oral language development, language experience, and programmed instruction. To be instituted in the junior high schools were reading labs utilizing programmed reading instruction, comprehension components, teaching machines, oral language, and language experience activities with language and phonics programs. The mathematics lab at Martin was to consist of the following components: readiness in mathematics, computational skills, problem solving/logic, modern mathematics, and Math in Life. Brief descriptions of the various reading and mathematics components appeared in the proposal. Clearly communicated was the notion that the instructional aides and new materials were to support the reading and mathematics curricula.

Focus of the Evaluation. The focus of the evaluation was set forth by the Office of Research and Evaluation of the AISD in written communication to the evaluators prior to their visit to the District.

The following questions were addressed in the process evaluation:

1. Are the aides being employed instructionally as specified in the proposal?
2. Are the components of the reading and mathematics curricula which were specified in the proposal being implemented?
3. Have aides and teachers received, and are they continuing to receive, adequate training and support from Project staff to allow effective implementation of the Project?

4. Are the materials to be provided with Project Assist funds available and being used?

Following are the questions which were addressed in the management audit:

1. Is the staffing allocation for management of the Project adequate?
2. Are the management staff members following their job descriptions?
3. Is management of the Project operated in a systematic fashion?
4. How effectively was the ordering of materials handled?
5. Are Project supervisory staff cognizant of how the Project is operating?
6. How effectively is Project management interfacing with school personnel?

Limitations of the Evaluation. Prior to their visit to the District the evaluators not only were naive concerning Project Assist, but also had no prior knowledge regarding the organization and operation of the AISD. This naivety presented both assets and liabilities. On the one hand, the evaluation could proceed with complete objectivity. On the other hand, the evaluators were not aware of the roles of decision makers and hence may have overlooked eliciting information from certain key individuals. However, with the focus provided by the AISD Office of Research and Evaluation and the practical experiences of both evaluators in school environments there appeared to be no critical limitations which were introduced.

Acting as a major limitation, however, was the restricted time span allotted for collecting necessary information. Three days were allowed for reviewing project materials and for interviewing (a) aides, teachers, and principals, (b) project staff, and (c) certain central administrators. Evaluation activities were organized to make optimum use of the available

time, but of necessity the evaluation questions could not be investigated to the depth which would have been possible had more time been allowed. With the time limitation, no observations of instructional activities were possible; in fact, there was not sufficient time to even establish the climate which is prerequisite to that technique of data collection. Thus, the information concerning the Project was collected by only one means: conducting personal interviews. A more extensive evaluation would have allowed for the collection of complementary data from various sources (e.g., classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews). As described below, the evaluators did protect against credulity and allow for validity checks in the data by having the different target groups respond to similar interview questions. Nevertheless, reliance on one method of data collection and the restricted time factor were critical limitations to the investigation.

Method

Target Groups. Instructional aides, classroom teachers with whom aides worked, the Project manager, the supervisor of the Project manager, and the AISD head administrator of the development division were the groups or individuals with whom the evaluators planned to conduct interviews. Fourteen of the 32 aides and 15 of the teachers with whom they worked were interviewed. Following is the distribution by school:

School	No. of Teachers Interviewed	No. of Aides Interviewed
Sims	4	3
Oak Springs	3	4
Martin (Math)	3	2
Martin (Reading)	2	2
Allan	3	3
	15	14

The four principals whose schools were involved in the Project, the Project manager, the supervisor of the Project manager, and the administrator of the development division also met with the evaluators and reacted to interview questions. Not interviewed was the Staff Development Coordinator of the Project, who had only very recently become a member of the Project staff.

Instrumentation. Open-question interview schedules specific to each target group were designed by the evaluators. Parallel questions appropriate for the various groups were included in the different schedules. Thus, for example, principals and teachers were asked to report about the specific responsibilities and duties performed by the aides; and aides were asked to make a self-report. Collecting similar information from different groups allowed cross-validation, a necessary procedure to ensure integrity of the data. Necessary, but slight modifications were made in the interview schedules as they were applied in the collection of data. Copies of the interview schedules are contained in the Appendix.

Procedure. Data were collected from January 27, 1976, through January 29, 1976. During that period each Project school, except Rosewood, was visited twice: once to conduct an interview with the principal and again on a subsequent occasion to hold interviews with aides and teachers. No teachers or aides were interviewed at Rosewood. The Project manager, the supervisor of the Project manager and the head administrator of the development division met with the evaluators according to a predetermined schedule which afforded mutual convenience.

Since it was not possible to interview all the teachers and aides who were involved in the Project, a specific selection technique was adopted. Aides were arbitrarily selected, with a deliberate attempt to represent a

variety of grade levels. Among teachers, grade-level or departmental heads, were sought for interviews. With one exception, teachers were interviewed only when an instructional aide was able to assume temporary control of the class or during lunch or planning periods. Similarly, aides were interviewed only during periods of noninstruction or when the teacher assumed total control of the class.

When conducting interviews with principals, teachers, and aides, the evaluators explained their roles as agents external to the AISD. The purpose of the evaluation was briefly described as an effort to determine whether or not Project Assist had, at an instructional level, been implemented as planned. Furthermore, those interviewed were told that a major objective of the investigation was to identify any conditions or problems which inhibited the Project from functioning optimally, so that appropriate, corrective action could then be taken by the Project Assist staff or other administrative personnel in the District.

Results

Process Evaluation.

1. Are the aides being employed instructionally as specified in the proposal?

The 1975-76 proposal for Project Assist stated that in elementary schools "all aides will work exclusively as classroom instructional aides on the reading task" and that they would "work with the teachers on one grade level." The proposal further stated that "aides at the junior high level will work with classroom teachers (in either reading or math)."

Aides were allocated within each school as follows:

School	No. Aides	Allocation Procedure
Sims	7	1 aide assigned to each grade level; 1 "floater"
Oak Springs	4	1 aide each assigned to grades 1, 2, and 3; 1 aide in the reading lab (Hoffman, Title I)
Rosewood	3	1 aide each assigned to grades 4 and 5; 1 "floater"
Martin	9	1 aide serving two 6th-grade teachers in "self-contained" situations; 2 aides and 2 teachers in 6th-grade reading lab; 2 aides and 2 teachers in 7th- and 8th-grade reading lab; 2 aides, 1 with each 6th-grade math teacher; 2 aides with three 7th and 8th-grade math teachers
Allan	9	3 aides with four 6th-grade language arts teachers; 1 aide with each of three 7th-grade English teachers; 3 aides with six 8th-grade teachers

Aides typically reported that they assisted students on a one-to-one basis or else worked with small groups of children carrying out learning activities prescribed by the teacher. Generally, they worked with the "slower" learners, those whom the teacher felt could benefit from more individual attention or supplemental instruction. The autonomy of the aide in assuming instructional tasks varied, seemingly based on the teacher's perception of the aide's ability. In some instances, as for example in the sixth-grade lab at Martin, aides apparently assumed a very independent role in instructing children. All aides looked to the teacher for supervision and were generally pleased with the guidance they received.

Although aides reported that their primary responsibilities were instructional, in most instances they also related that they were regularly

expected to perform prescribed noninstructional duties (e.g., supervise students in the cafeteria during lunch or during the breakfast program, assist in the school library, and duplicate and prepare materials for instructional use). Corroborative data were provided by classroom teachers. Many extra-instructional duties were assigned directly by the principal. Much of the noninstructional support to teachers (preparing material, etc.) was accomplished after the children had been dismissed from school for the day.

In self-contained classrooms most aides and teachers candidly reported that instructional assistance was provided in areas other than reading. That instruction was often described by teachers as "reading related," such as might be the case when social studies materials were covered. Aides also reported rather frequent involvement in mathematics instruction. The general sentiment seemed to be that, although aides were to be employed in a prescribed fashion, scheduling constraints and the need for noninstructional adult supervision made it necessary from a practical point of view to have aides assume a limited number of other duties.

2. Are the components of the reading and mathematics curricula which were specified in the proposal being implemented?

Information obtained from elementary teachers provided no evidence of any systematic efforts to integrate the curriculum components specified by Project Assist. Teachers viewed the Project as being aimed at supplying aides and materials; and, except for the necessary adjustments made to accomodate the infusion of those components, no major changes had been made in the reading curriculum.

Two reading labs were functioning at Martin Junior High. One, serving

mostly seventh graders and some eighth graders, was based upon Educational Development Laboratory (EDL) materials and equipment. The other, a sixth-grade lab, used Hoffman and Behavioral Research Laboratory (BRL) materials and equipment. Information provided by teachers and aides suggested that the EDL lab was functioning more smoothly than the Hoffman/BRL lab. During the visit to the Hoffman/BRL lab there appeared to be some problems in the area of classroom management, and the teachers reported that operation of the lab was hindered by equipment breakage. An extended interview with the three teachers in the "mathematics lab" and a visit to the instructional area revealed that a true lab approach was not being used. The "lab" and an adjoining room accomodated three classes (two seventh-grade classes and one eighth-grade class), and the teachers essentially used the space as separate classrooms. The teachers, all of whom were in their first year at the school, were aware of the plan to start a lab but felt they lacked the space, materials, and support to establish one. Some materials were available, and two aides were providing instructional assistance; but otherwise, the proposed aims of the Project were not being implemented.

At Allan teachers appeared to be less knowledgable about the curriculum components of the Project. Labs were not operational and teachers either worked with one aide or shared the services of an aide on a predetermined schedule.

3. Have aides and teachers received, and are they continuing to receive, adequate training and support from Project staff to allow effective implementation of the Project?

Aides reported that they had participated in preservice training conducted by the Project Coordinator in either late September or early October immediately before they began work in the schools. Those who had worked in

Project Assist in the past were, as reported by the Project Coordinator, placed in the schools after a brief orientation. Interview data from aides who were replacements for aides who had quit indicated that they had been placed with little or no training. Those aides who participated in the preservice training expressed the opinion that, although they deemed the training worthwhile, it was not specific to the duties they were expected to perform. For example, there appeared to be no differentiation in training according to grade level nor specific reading curricula which were used among the schools. "On-the-job training" by teachers with whom the aides worked was reported as providing the greatest benefit in those areas.

No teacher reported having participated in joint training activities with aides during the present Project period. Also, apparently little or no inservice training was held for either teachers or aides. Aides reported turning to teachers for guidance and supervision. Overall, they expressed satisfaction with their working relationship with teachers. (Two of the aides, however, expressed dissatisfaction relating to interpersonal relationships with teachers.) Teachers in general reciprocated this feeling, expressing satisfaction with the work performed by aides; however, in cases where teachers had direct contact with more than one aide, variance in abilities was frequently emphasized. Teachers also reported that there had been no systematic monitoring of their classrooms by Project staff to assess whether or not aides were being employed effectively.

The interview with the Project Coordinator revealed the primary reason for the limited amount of staff development: the Staff Development Coordinator had not been hired until January. That position had become vacant

when the present Project Coordinator, who had been Staff Development Coordinator in 1974-75, became Acting Project Coordinator and finally assumed full responsibility as Project Coordinator.

4. Are the materials to be provided with Project Assist funds available and being used?

A copy of the Project budget provided by the Project Coordinator revealed that approximately $92,500 had been allowed for the purchase of consumable and nonconsumable materials and somewhat less than $6,000 for equipment. Materials were apparently selected by teachers with the assistance of instructional coordinators shortly after school had started, although plans called for earlier selection of materials. Principals, teachers, and aides acknowledged that materials had been ordered late and many had not yet arrived at the schools. Principals in particular expressed concern that materials were arriving late. There was also concern regarding the equipment which was to be forwarded from those schools which had previously been involved in the Project. The transfer had not been made, although it would seem reasonable to expect that it should have been made shortly after the beginning of school.

Teachers in general reported satisfaction with those materials which had arrived, although one teacher reported that materials were consistently arriving in the wrong quantity. They also reported that the materials were being put to use instructionally. Again, however, there was no apparent monitoring from the Project staff to ensure that materials were used as intended.

Management Audit.

1. Is the staffing allocation for the management of the Project adequate?

The proposed management staffing allocation appeared to be appropriate. A program director and a staff development person for five school sites and 32 instructional aides seemed conceptually reasonable. The fact that one person was unable to accomplish the duties of both positions from early in September through the middle of January clearly demonstrated that one individual at the management level is insufficient. With the acquisition of the Staff Development Coordinator, it will become feasible to ascertain whether the Project can be effectively managed by two individuals.

2. Are the management staff members following their job descriptions?

In an attempt to identify the extent to which the management staff members followed their job descriptions, two obstacles were encountered. The first involved the resignation of the Project Coordinator in early September. That vacancy was filled by the Staff Development Coordinator, thus, leaving vacant the staff development position until the middle of January, although the Project Coordinator attempted to fulfill both roles. It appeared to the evaluators that the period of time for which the vacancy existed was unreasonably long. The second obstacle involved a lack of specific job functions. The dual role assumed by the Project Coordinator dictated that only those activities needing attention received attention. Those activities largely involved preservice training for aides, acquisition of materials and supplies, and preparation of the 1976-77 proposal.

3. Is management of the Project operated in a systematic fashion?

Management of the Project appeared to lack long-range goals. The extenuating circumstances arising from the staff development vacancy kept the Project Coordinator's focus on immediate needs: visits to Project schools appeared to be based on need or request; interaction with other

departments was dictated by the immediate need for materials, equipment, and so on; and staff development was limited to preservice training for aides as compared to long-term and continuous inservice training for both aides and teachers.

4. How effectively was the ordering of materials handled?

The ordering and acquisition of materials presented certain difficulties. There appeared to be limited interaction with the division of instruction in the past operation of the Project. Therefore, even though materials had been considered in the spring of 1975, changes were made (based on input from instructional consultants) so the thrust of Project Assist would coincide with the District's adopted curriculum. As a result, orders for materials were placed late, and the materials were not available at the intended time.

5. Are Project supervisory staff cognizant of how the Project is operating?

The Project Coordinator was aware that many of the components of Project Assist had not been initiated and would likely receive little attention during the remainder of the year. There also appeared to be an awareness of the activities in which the aides were involved (some of which were marginal according to their job description).

6. How effectively is Project management interfacing with school personnel?

Building principals thought the Project Coordinator was providing adequate contact with them. However, it was apparent that the interaction of the Project Coordinator with the principals was largely service oriented and did not always ensure the successful fulfillment of Project goals. Furthermore, the evaluators could find no evidence of any systematic attempt

to monitor the Project at the classroom level (i.e., regular visits to classrooms were not made to facilitate implementation of all components of the Project).

Conclusions

The Office of Research and Evaluation of the AISD must take into account the findings of this process evaluation when conducting the end-of-year product evaluation. Except for operation of the reading labs at Martin, the educational treatment outlined by Project Assist did not exist. Aides had been employed and were working to support instruction, but they had not received at the Project level the training specified in the proposal to uniquely prepare them in either the reading or mathematics program specified by the Project. Since instructional materials were ordered late and many had not yet arrived at the schools, they could not be considered as an intervention for the entire Project period. The reading curriculum components had not been implemented at the elementary schools, the mathematics lab was not in operation at Martin, and at Allan there were no reading labs. Thus, it would seem that no decision can be made for the current Project period regarding the effects of specially trained instructional aides supporting the reading and mathematics curricula specified in the Project proposal (except, of course, for the reading labs at Martin). The hypothesis of significant program effects (as specified in the proposal) can be tested for the Martin reading labs, but care should be taken to identify the target populations served by those labs. Otherwise, "program effect" must be limited by an operational definition as greater support of the existing curriculum by aides and materials.

One situation discovered by the evaluators may require some consideration by AISD administrators. Conceptually, developmental projects are unique in that they appeal for funds on the basis of providing something previously unavailable to a specific group of children. Project Assist was intended to be unique in that it employed instructional aides who were to receive preservice and inservice training specific to the tasks they would be given in the classroom. To date this had not taken place during the 1975-76 school year; hence, it was impossible to distinguish between instructional aides on the basis of funding source (e.g., Title I, Project Assist). This might create difficulties when one considers justification to funding sources. An example that was most obvious occurred at Oak Springs, where a Title I lab had been established prior to 1975-76. To operate, this lab required the assistance of an instructional aide. Instead of placing the Title I aide in this lab, a Project Assist aide was functioning there while the Title I aide worked with kindergarten children. This obvious mixing of funds and lack of rational for placement of instructional aides by program can only create problems.

The evaluators were quickly made aware of sentiments regarding what might occur in the Project schools in the coming year. School personnel at all levels (aides, teachers, and principals) had been informed that the Project was coming to an end. Significant redirection of the AISD Pilot Project under ESAA is being proposed for 1976-77, according to the Project Coordinator. In particular, aides were uncertain as to their futures, and teachers were concerned that the present level of instructional assistance might be drastically reduced. Inasmuch as the sentiments expressed to evaluators may also have an effect on work morale, steps should be taken

by the Project manager and upper-level administrators to subdue those concerns. Certainly aides cannot be guaranteed a position for next year, but steps can be taken to ensure their application (or preference) for future positions. Communication of that endeavor may do much to alleviate the present concern. It should be remembered that in the 1975-76 proposal the replicability of the Project called for re-employment of the aides in the Title I reading program when the Project ended.

More apparent than concern regarding future employment of aides was the "winding-down" feeling which was expressed by all personnel who were interviewed. The Project Coordinator and Staff Development Coordinator may find it advantageous to concentrate on planning, organizing, and supporting (through staff development and monitoring of classrooms) the reading and mathematics curricula in such a way that teachers can follow the tenets of Project Assist in the coming year. A full complement of instructional materials should be available for 1976-77 and, if the support of the instructional coordinators of the District is elicited, implementation of the components could be supervised. In this way the target schools can realize the intended benefits of the Project.

A P P E N D I X

Instructional Aides

BACKGROUND

1. What is your educational background?

2. What is your past work experience?

3. What is the length of your experience as an aide?

4. When did you begin in the school for this year?
   Have you worked continuously at this school since being placed?
   If not, describe.

5. How were you selected for your present position (i.e., what were the qualifications)?

WORK RESPONSIBILITIES

6. What are your specific responsibilities and duties?

7. Do you work only in one classroom? If assignment is split, how many classrooms and how is the time allocated?
   (Labs) Do you spend full time in the lab? If not, where?

8. What percentage of your time is spent in instructional contact with students?
   What percent in clerical work (e.g., grading and filing papers, preparing materials)?
   Other? Describe.

9. During instructional contact, how many students do you work with at a time?
   How are the students selected?

10. Do any of your duties require you to leave the school during normal working hours? If so, describe.

11. What are your normal working hours? Does this differ from the school faculty?

12. Who supervises your work?

13. Who do you ask for help when you need assistance?

14. What happens when a teacher with whom you work is absent? When another aide is absent?

15. Do you intend to continue to work as an aide? In your present position? Rest of this year? Next year?

PROJECT ASSIST

16. When did the Project begin operating in this school?

17. Is there an adequate supply of materials? Equipment? If not, what is needed?

18. Do you think Project Assist is effective in teaching reading/math skills?

19. Are you satisfied in your working relationship with the teachers?

TRAINING

20. What kind of training have you had in the Project? When? By whom?

21. How many hours of trainig would you estimate you have received?

22. Have you participated in any training with teachers?

23. Do you think the training has helped you to do a better job?

Teacher

BACKGROUND

1. How much experience (no. of years) do you have in teaching?

2. How long have you worked in your present position?
   Have you worked continuously at this school in your present assignment since the beginning of the year? If not, describe.

READING, ELEMENTARY

3. How do you organize your class for reading instruction (e.g., grouping)?

4. How much time do you devote to reading instruction each day?
   Is this the same for all students?

5. What materials and equipment have been provided by Project Assist?
   Stored in the classroom?
   Kept outside the classroom? Where?

6. When were the materials and equipment made available?

7. What materials and equipment do you use? Frequency?

8. What training have you received for Project Assist? When? By whom?
   Do you feel that the training has improved your ability to teach reading?

9. What contact have you had with the manager of Project Assist?
   With other facilitator(s)?

10. Have District personnel other than Project staff visited your classroom to obtain information about Project Assist?

11. What conditions or problems exist which prevent Project Assist from functioning optimally?
    What can be done to overcome these weaknesses?

12. (Reading Components) Are the children in your class exposed to RIF?
    How is the RIF program operated (e.g., classroom, library)?
    How many books have been awarded?
    Are a sufficient number of books available?
    Have all children received books?

13. (Reading Components) What instructional activities are used for oral language development? Materials and equipment for support?

14. (Reading Components) What instructional activities are used in language experience? Materials and equipment for support?

15. (Reading Components) Is programmed instruction being used?
    What are the curriculum materials/equipment?

READING/MATH LAB

16. Description of the lab: space allocation, materials, equipment, staffing, location, number of students.

17. Describe how the lab operates.

18. How many children are served by the lab?

19. How long are the children in the lab each day?

20. How are students selected to participate in the lab?

21. How is placement determined?
Were placement tests available at the beginning of the year?

22. When did the lab begin operation (this year)?

23. Is the lab supplementary to classroom instruction?
How is instruction in the lab coordinated with instruction in the classroom?

24. What types of records concerning progress are kept?

25. How is student mastery assessed?

26. How are the children handled logistically?

27. Were the necessary materials and equipment available at the beginning of the year so the lab could begin operation?

28. What are the present shortages in material and equipment?

29. (Reading) Are all components of the curriculum present?
Programmed instruction, comprehension, teaching machines, oral language, language experience, phonics.

30. (Math) Are all components of the curriculum present?
Computation, problem-solving logic, modern math, Math in Life.

31. What problems are there in the operation of the lab? Solutions?

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDES

32. Does a Project Assist aide work in the classroom/lab?

33. How long have you had the services of the aide?

34. Does the aide have work responsibilites outside your classroom?
If so, what? For whom?

35. How is the time of the aide distributed (% instructional, % other)?

36. What special training has the aide received?

37. Have you participated in any joint training with the aide? When?
By whom?

38. In what ways do you take advantage of the aide's training?

39. Do you feel that the training has increased the aide's performance?

40. How would you rate the aide in terms of ability? Attitude? Dependability?

41. What happens if the aide is absent?
If you are absent?

42. Have you or do you work with aides other than the Project Assist aides?
How does the Project Assist aide compare?

Principal

1. School description: grade span, enrollment, racial distribution, no. of teachers and aides, SEL of community (eligible for Title I, free lunch), other remedial programs

2. How long have you been in your position at this school?

3. How was this school chosen for participation in Project Assist?

4. Were materials, equipment, and personnel assembled in time to start the Project in the fall?
   When did each component become fully operational?

5. What are the responsibilities and duties of the Project Assist aides? Other aides? Assignment to teachers/grade levels?

6. What has been done to inform community members about the Project? Reaction?

7. What is the apparent acceptance of the Project on the part of teachers? Aides? Students?

8. Staff turnover (teachers, aides)?

9. Who is responsible for the supervision of the aides?

10. Who provides technical assistance to the aides?

11. How were the aides selected? By whom?

12. What is done when teachers or aides are absent?

13. What training have the aides received?
    Has it appreciably improved their job performance?

14. How would you rate the aides in terms of ability? Attitude? Dependability

15. What is the frequency of contact with the Project manager? Project facilitator(s)?

16. Do you feel that you are adequately informed regarding the operation of the Project? If not what information is needed? From whom?

17. Is the Project managed to avoid major crisis?

18. Are you satisfied with your working relationship with the manager of the Project? Facilitator(s)? If not, in what ways?

19. What are the strengths of the Project?
    What are its weaknesses? How can they be overcome?

20. Do you feel the Project is effective in improving reading/math skills beyond what might be expected under "traditional" instruction? If not, why does the Project fall short?

21. What conditions presently exist or have existed which prevent the Project from functioning optimally? How can these be overcome?

Project Manager/Facilitator(s)

1. What is your role in the Project?

2. How long have you served in your present position?

3. Describe organization of Project staff? Job responsibilities?

4. Work-related background?

5. How were the particular schools in the project selected?

6. What were your responsibilities in the start-up of the Project?

7. When were the materials for start-up ordered? Received? Distributed?

8. What shortages presently exist in the supply of materials or equipment? What is the impact on the operation of the Project?

9. Briefly describe the implementation of the Project to date?

10. What staff development has occurred to date? What is projected?

11. What procedures or system do you use to monitor the function of the Project

12. How often are site visits made? Who is contacted on a site visit? Are visits made to classrooms to observe instruction? How often? How long are the visits?

13. What is your role in the supervision of aides? If directly responsible, how is this carried out? If not, how are checks made on the function of aides?

14. What are the job responsibilities of the aides? What specific duties are they expected to perform?

15. How were the curriculum materials selected/developed? By whom?

16. Who ensures that the materials and equipment are being properly used? How?

17. Are you satisfied with the working relationship which you have with building administrators? Teachers? Aides? If not, what problems exist and how can they be overcome?

18. What is the level of acceptance of the project by building administrators? Teachers? Aides?

19. What role did you play in assembling the proposal for the Project?

20. What role do you play in selecting Project staff?

21. What has been the turnover in staff, particularly as related to instructio aides?

22. Has staffing been adequate to allow implementation of the Project as planned?

23. How were the instructional aides selected? What were their qualifications
Do the qualifications differ from other aides?
What is the pay schedule for the aides? How does this compare to other aides in the District?

24. Are there plans for the Project to continue next year? Will your role remain the same?

25. Have you received adequate support for operating the Project from other district departments (personnel, purchasing, payroll)?

26. What has been done to inform community members about the Project? What is planned?

27. Is the budget adequate for operation of the Project? Will all funds be encumbered?

28. What contact have you had with USOE officials?
What assistance has USOE provided?

29. What conditions exist which prevent the Project from functioning optimally? Solutions?

Central Administrators

1. What information do you receive on the operation of the Project (e.g., reports, meetings)?

2. How were the particular schools in the Project selected?

3. Were you involved in the development of the proposal? If so, how?

4. Has the Project received adequate support from other District offices (personnel, purchasing, payroll)? If not, what are the problems?

5. Has adequate assistance been provided by USOE officers? How is the information obtained? Timely? Useful?

6. What problems existed in the start-up of the Project?

7. Do any problems presently exist in the operation of the Project? How can they be overcome?

8. Is the Project fully operational? If not, why?

9. What is the level of acceptance of the Project by principals? Teachers? Aides? Community?

10. Is the Project supported by adequate staff development?

11. Are there plans for the Project to continue next year? Will your role remain the same?

PROCESS EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT AUDIT OF ESAA PROJECT ASSIST IN THE AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT: MAY, 1976, FINDINGS

A report submitted to the
Office of Research and Evaluation
Austin Independent School District
Austin, Texas

by

C. LaVor Lym, Ph.D.

76
June, 1976

Introduction

Presented in this report are end-of-year findings of a process evaluation and management audit of Project Assist, an ESAA pilot project funded during 1975-76 in the Austin Independent School District (AISD), Austin, Texas. The report is made pursuant to a contractual agreement between the evaluator and the AISD and is a follow-up to an earlier report[1] submitted to the District's Office of Research and Evaluation regarding a similar assessment made during the last week of January, 1976.

Findings of the January Evaluation. Generally speaking, the aim of the January evaluation was to determine whether or not Project Assist had been implemented and was operating according to the plan stipulated in the proposal. Where a difference was found to exist between the project as designed and the project as it actually operated, information was sought which would account for the discrepancy. Focus of the evaluation was limited to four areas: (a) to determine whether or not the aides were functioning in an instructional capacity, (b) to determine the extent to which the reading and mathematics curricula were being implemented, (c) to assess the extent to which the Project was being supported by staff development for aides and teachers, and (d) to determine the disposition of the instructional materials which were to be provided with Project funds. The management audit was principally addressed to the following: (a) to determine if the staffing allocation for management of the Project was adequate, (b) to determine whether or not management of the Project was carried out in a systematic fashion, and (c) to assess the function of Project managers in monitoring the operation of the Project at the instructional level

[1]Lym, C. L. and Krueck, T. G. Process Evaluation and Management Audit of ESAA Project Assist in the Austin Independent School District: January, 1976, Findings.

(i.e., the means used to facilitate infusion of the curriculum components and support materials and to ensure that aides functioned according to their job descriptions). A major limitation of both the evaluation and the audit was the restricted time span during which information was collected. Three days (January 27-29, 1976) were allowed for reviewing Project materials and for interviewing a sample of aides, a sample of teachers, principals, the Project Coordinator, and certain central administrators. The number of teachers and aides who were interviewed were 15 and 14 respectively.

The principal findings of the evaluation were as follows:

1. Aides reported that their primary responsibilities were instructional, but in many instances they also related that they were expected to perform prescribed noninstructional duties (e.g., supervise students in the lunchroom, serve as monitors in the school library, and duplicate and prepare materials for instructional use at times when they could have been in the classroom). Although the majority of instructional support by aides in self-contained classrooms appeared to be in the area of reading, teachers and aides frequently reported that assistance was provided in other subject areas. At Allan Junior High, aides worked with language arts or English teachers; at Martin Junior High, all aides except one worked in a reading lab setting or with specialized mathematics teachers. The aide who was an exception worked full time in a self-contained sixth-grade classroom where two teachers were teaming.

2. There was no evidence in the elementary schools of any systematic effort to implement the curriculum components specified in the Project proposal. Teachers viewed the Project as being aimed at supplying aides and materials; and, except for the necessary adjustments made to accommodate infusion of those components, no major changes had been made in the reading curriculum. Two reading labs operated at Martin Junior High, one serving sixth graders and the other serving mostly seventh graders and some eighth graders. The mathematics lab(s) had not been organized. Also, no reading lab was operational at Allan Junior High.

3. The Staff Development Coordinator position had been vacant until shortly before the evaluation was made. Most aides had participated in a preservice training session which was conducted by the Project Coordinator. No preservice training was held for teachers, and no inservice training sessions had been held for either aides or teachers.

4. Materials were selected shortly after school had started, although plans called for that task to be completed much earlier. Principals, teachers, and aides acknowledged that materials had been ordered late and many had not yet arrived at the schools.

General conclusions from the assessment of the management of the Project were as follows:

1. No judgement could be made concerning the adequacy of the staffing allocation for management of the Project since the staff development position had been vacant for an extended period. The personnel allocation seemed conceptually reasonable, and the fact that the Project Coordinator was unable to effectively accomplish the duties of both program director and staff development specialist clearly demonstrated that one individual at the management level was insufficient.

2. Management of the Project appeared to lack long-range goals. The Project Coordinator was aware that many of the components of the Project had not been initiated, and she expressed the belief that they would likely receive little attention during the remainder of the year. Late start-up and the vacancy in the position of Staff Development Coordinator were cited as causal factors.

3. There was no evidence of any systematic attempt to monitor the operation of the Project at the classroom level (i.e., regular visits did not appear to be made to classrooms to facilitate implementation of the curriculum components, to ensure the proper use of instructional materials, or to make certain that aides functioned within their job descriptions).

The May, 1976, Evaluation. The end-of-year evaluation was conducted to determine what changes had occurred in the management and operation of the Project since mid-year. Specifically, the process evaluation was addressed to the following questions:

1. Had there been any changes since mid-year in the work responsibilities of the aides (i.e., did they function any differently than they had at mid-year)?

2. What progress had been made since mid-year in the infusion of the reading and mathematics programs which had been specified to be implemented in the Project proposal?

3. Had there been provision since mid-year for training of aides and teachers to facilitate implementation of the instructional components of the Project?

4. What had been the disposition of the materials which were to be made available through Project funds?

The following questions were examined in the management audit:

1. Had the staffing allocation for management of the Project been adequate?

2. Had the duties performed by management staff members been consistent with those duties which they would reasonably be expected to perform in their job roles?

3. Had management of the Project been operated in a systematic fashion?

4. How effectively had the management staff members monitored the operation of the Project at the classroom level in order to ensure its successful implementation?

The May evaluation suffered the same limitations as did the evaluation which had been conducted in January. Most significant was the restricted time span allowed for the collection of information. During a period of two-and-a-half days, visits were made to each of the Project schools for the purpose of conducting interviews with aides, teachers, and principals. Extended interviews were also held with the Project Coordinator and the Staff Development Coordinator. All data were obtained from the personal interviews; no time was allowed for the observation of instructional activities or the collection of data by any other means.

Method

Target Groups and Individuals. Instructional aides, teachers with whom the aides worked, school principals, the Project Coordinator, and the Staff Development Coordinator were the groups or individuals from whom the evaluator planned to obtain data. Each principal, the Project Coordinator, and the Staff Development Coordinator were interviewed. Nonprobability

samples of teachers and aides were interviewed; following is the distribution by school:

School	No. Teachers	No. Aides
Sims	6	3
Oak Springs	3	3
Rosewood	2	2
Martin	5	4
Allan	3	4
Total	19	16

Instrumentation. The interview schedules which had been used in January were revised for use in May. They were reduced in length and their formats were changed to afford easier recording of responses. Copies of the revised forms appear in the Appendix.

Procedures. Data were collected from May 5, 1976, through May 7, 1976. During that period each Project school was visited and interviews were conducted with the principal and nonprobability samples of teachers and aides. After all schools had been visited, the Project Coordinator and the Staff Development Coordinator were interviewed. A conference was held with a representative of the Office of Research and Evaluation upon exit.

The procedure for selection of aides and teachers was similar to that used in the January evaluation. Aides were arbitrarily selected, with a deliberate attempt to represent a variety of grade levels and teaching environments (e.g., self-contained, lab, team-teaching, and subject-area specialization). Grade-level or departmental heads and those in unique teaching environments were purposely selected for interviews among the population of teachers. Of the 19 teachers who were interviewed, 8 had

been interviewed during the evaluation in January; 10 of the 16 aides had previously been interviewed.

Results

Process Evaluation

1. Had there been any changes since mid-year in the work responsibilities of the aides (i.e., did they function any differently than they had at mid-year)?

No changes were reported in the allocation of aides among the schools or the assignment of aides within the various schools. Aides who had provided in January a self-report of their duties stated that there had been little or no change in their work-related activities. The most frequently reported way in which aides supported instruction was the supervision of small homogeneous groups. Acting as a facilitator during periods of independent study and providing instruction on a one-to-one basis were the next most frequently reported modes of instruction in which aides were involved.

Sims. Aides were assigned the task of monitoring the breakfast program from 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. From 8:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., the period during which children were in the classrooms, the aides were expected to maintain a schedule where they worked for various periods of time in different classrooms. Each aide worked only in classrooms on one grade level. The one aide who worked with kindergarten teachers spent an entire day with each teacher, working with different teachers on different days of the week. All other aides were scheduled to rotate among various teachers each day. Two of six teachers who were interviewed noted that aides were typically 15 to 20 minutes late in reporting to the first class

because of work in the cafeteria for the breakfast program. After 2:30 aides assisted teachers in planning activities, grading and reporting, or preparation of instructional materials.

The three aides who were interviewed reported limited involvement in subject areas other than reading (e.g., mathematics, social studies, and art). Some teachers also candidly reported that aides became involved in instruction in subject areas other than reading. The extent of that involvement, however, appeared not to be great. Three of the six teachers expressed dissatisfaction in the working relationship with their aides, citing lack of dependability or lack of enthusiasm as the cause. On the other hand, the three aides who were interviewed all expressed satisfaction in their working relationship with teachers.

Oak Springs/Rosewood. Four aides were employed at Oak Springs (grades K-3) and three aides at Rosewood (grades 4-5). From 7:30 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. the aides at Oak Springs served as monitors in the cafeteria for the breakfast program. Instructional support was provided to teachers from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., during which time the aides were scheduled to be in classrooms. With one exception, either the daily schedule (i.e., rotation among teachers each day) or a weekly schedule (i.e., an entire day with each teacher, rotating across days of the week) was followed. One of the Project Assist aides at Oak Springs worked in the Title I reading lab (and had been placed there the entire year), while the others worked in Grades 1, 2, and 3 respectively. A Title I aide provided instructional support to the kindergarten teachers. Aides at Rosewood followed a daily schedule and worked in both fourth-grade and fifth-grade classrooms.

Only one of the five aides interviewed at the two schools reported any significant involvement in a subject area other than reading, and even then the extent of that involvement was said to be limited. Two of the five teachers reported that aides supported instruction in areas other than reading; instructional support for "reading related" activities in other subject areas was also mentioned. All teachers who were interviewed stated that they were satisfied in the working relationships with aides, and all aides reciprocated with a similar expression of satisfaction.

Martin Junior High. The nine aides at Martin Junior High were allocated as follows: two aides served three mathematics teachers (grades 7 and 8); two aides worked in a sixth-grade reading lab; two aides worked in a reading lab for seventh and eighth graders (mostly seventh graders); one aide served each of two sixth-grade mathematics teachers; and one aide worked in a self-contained sixth-grade classroom where two teachers were teaming.

Aides worked from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., the same working hours as teachers. Classes started at 8:30 and ended at 3:30. From 8:00 until 8:30 and 3:30 until 4:00 aides were to work with teachers in planning and preparation. In most instances, aides also assisted in planning and preparation during the teachers' conference periods. Except for the self-contained sixth-grade classroom, all aides were working directly in reading or mathematics and functioned in an instructional capacity. As might be expected, the aide in the self-contained classroom was reported to be involved in all subject areas.

One of the five teachers who was interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with his/her working relationship with an aide. The other four teachers said

they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" in their working relationships with the aides. Among the aides, one of the four who were interviewed expressed extreme dissatisfaction with his/her work-related association with a teacher.

Allan Junior High. Three aides at Allan Junior High served five seventh- and eighth-grade English teachers; one aide worked full-time with one of the teachers, and each of the other two aides spent one-half day with each of two teachers. Also, three aides supported three seventh- and eighth-grade reading teachers, one aide working full-time with each teacher. And finally, three other aides worked with six sixth-grade teachers, each aide working with two teachers. These teachers principally taught language arts, but they also taught in other subject areas (i.e., mathematics, science, and social studies). In fact, aides were scheduled to be present during periods when subjects other than reading or language arts were being taught. However, none of the four aides who were interviewed reported work in any subject area other than reading or language arts.

All of the aides who were interviewed stated that they had been assigned by the principal to be lunchroom monitors, and one aide reported having been assigned as a monitor in the library. Two of the four aides mentioned that they were sometimes called upon to supervise classes of another teacher for at least part of the day if the teacher were unexpectedly absent; one of the aides noted that the frequency of substitution had increased as the end of school neared and that there appeared to be little urgency in obtaining the services of a qualified substitute teacher because of the ready reserve of aides.

The reports made by teachers and aides generally seemed to indicate that, excluding the time for duty in the lunchroom, aides were less frequently involved in instruction than were aides in the other schools. For example, one aide reported spending three periods of instruction with teachers on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and six periods on Tuesday and Thursday. "Very little" instructional contact with students during the recent past was also reported by the same aide. Another aide reported that each Friday was typically devoted to "clerical" work. Still another reported that, because of the lunch schedule, one-half of a subsequent period was lost in addition to the time spent monitoring the lunchroom.

The three teachers who were interviewed stated that they were satisfied in their working relationships with aides. One of them, however, noted that "morale" among the aides was "very bad" because of the assignments as lunchroom monitors and service as ad hoc substitutes. Two of the four aides expressed extreme dissatisfaction with the assignments, noting that those work duties were outside their job descriptions and that although the Project managers had been made aware of the problem, no resolution had been reached. All four of the aides stated that they were satisfied in their working relationships with teachers.

2. What progress had been made since mid-year in the infusion of the reading and mathematics programs which had been specified to be implemented in the Project proposal?

None of the information obtained from either classroom teachers or the management staff provided any evidence of an effort to integrate the curriculum components other than RIF or Math in Life specified for Project Read and Project Math. Plans for RIF and Math in Life were complete; and, although late, follow-through shortly before the close of school appeared

imminent. Otherwise, the status had not changed since January for implementation of the reading and mathematics curricula (recall that two reading labs were functional at Martin Junior High and had operated since the beginning of school).

The Project Coordinator expressed the feeling that the proposed implementation of all curriculum components in a single year was unrealistic. In her opinion the constraints imposed by the late release of funds, the late date at which she assumed control of the Project, and the vacancy in the position of Staff Development Coordinator which existed until January further acted to impede full implementation of the Project.

3. Had there been provision since mid-year for training of aides and teachers to facilitate implementation of the instructional components of the Project?

The Staff Development Coordinator indicated that four staff development workshops for aides had been held since January. All of the 16 aides who were interviewed stated that they had received training in at least two of the workshops. Each was asked if the training had subsequently been helpful to on-the-job performance; 11 responded affirmatively, four reported that the training had not been helpful, and one did not give a definitive answer. Following are summaries of the comments given by those aides who felt the training was of little or no value and who offered further explanations:

1. The information, skills, and techniques which were imparted by the training sessions had already been acquired through previous on-the-job experience as an aide.

2. Course-work in a teacher education program had covered the same areas which were focused upon in the workshops.

3. Emphasis was placed on skills and techniques which had greater application at the elementary level (comment given by an aide in one of the junior high schools).

According to the Staff Development Coordinator, teachers were not the target population for any training session, nor were there any sessions designed specifically for both aides and teachers. Two of the 19 teachers who were interviewed stated that they had attended one of the training sessions for aides, which was consistent with the report given by the Staff Development Coordinator that teachers were invited to attend and a few had elected to be present.

4. What had been the disposition of the materials which were to be made available through Project funds?

Teachers reported that only a few items which had been ordered with Project funds had not arrived, and nearly all of those were things which had been back-ordered. Most of the teachers agreed that the vast bulk of materials had been received by the end of January, although much of the material was reported to have arrived in the period between Thanksgiving and Christmas. In general, teachers expressed pleasure in the variety and quantity of materials which had been afforded by the Project. Two teachers, however, spontaneously stated that lack of follow-through in training teachers how to apply the materials was a serious shortcoming of the Project. Another teacher pointed out that use of some of the materials (e.g., cassette recordings) had been limited because of lack of certain equipment. For the most part, however, an abundance of materials was evident in the classrooms which were visited; and nearly all teachers expressed positive sentiments about the materials which had been provided.

Management Audit

1. Had the staffing allocation for management of the Project been adequate?

It was impossible in January, 1976, to determine whether or not the staffing allocation for management of the project was adequate since a complete staff (the Project Coordinator and the Staff Development Coordinator) had functioned for only a short while. Even in May, 1976, a definitive answer could not be given to this question. The managers almost certainly functioned much differently than they would have if a complete staff had been present during the first half of the year.

One critical function of management, that of carefully monitoring implementation and operation of the instructional programs, was certainly hindered because of the vacant position. However, the evaluator seriously questioned if that function could have been effectively performed even if the vacancy had not existed. Perhaps a management configuration where one individual functioned full-time as a program facilitator without responsibility for staff development would have been more adequate.

2. Had the duties performed by management staff members been consistent with those duties which they would reasonably be expected to perform in their job roles?

Following are the principal activities which the Project Coordinator and Staff Development Coordinator reported as having been accomplished since January, 1976: arranging for transfer to Project schools of equipment from schools participating in the Project prior to 1975-76; final preparation of the Project proposal for 1976-77; preparation for the RIF program; ordering of additional materials (classroom libraries); distribution of some Project materials; planning for the Math in Life program; planning of the "open house" for the Project; working in cooperation with the Personnel Department to arrange for placement of aides; coordinating Trilogy and Outreach programs; arranging and conducting staff development

workshops; and visiting schools to observe on-the-job performance of aides and to react to the needs of teachers and principals. Inservice training, distribution of materials, observation of aides, and holding conferences with teachers were reported to be the primary responsibilities of the Staff Development Coordinator; other activities were the primary responsibility of the Project Coordinator.

Information obtained during interviews supported the self-report of activities made by the management staff. For example, principals reported that the transfer of equipment had been made, teachers indicated that preparations were being made for distributing RIF books, and aides noted the arrangements which had been made for their continued employment. The aforementioned activities were judged to be consistent with those duties which the management staff could reasonably be expected to perform in their job roles.

3. Had management of the Project been operated in a systematic fashion?

There was evidence that certain activities which were consistent with the proposal had been planned and were about to be undertaken by Project management (e.g., Math in Life, RIF, assistance to aides regarding future employment, and the "open house" to facilitate replication). Furthermore, the Project Coordinator indicated that the proposed pilot project under ESAA for 1976-77 was designed to overcome some of the weaknesses which had been encountered during 1975-76 (e.g., seeking to integrate the Project with the overall instructional program of the District, formulating plans to gain the complete support of Project schools, and specification of realistic goals). This information led the evaluator to conclude that the management

of the Project had operated much more systematically than it had in January. Certainly, having no vacancies in the Project staff contributed significantly to this end.

4. How effectively had the management staff members monitored the operation of the Project at the classroom level in order to ensure its successful implementation?

Seven of the 19 teachers who were interviewed reported that neither the Project Coordinator nor the Staff Development Coordinator had visited their classrooms since January. An additional five teachers reported that visits had been made to their classrooms by the Staff Development Coordinator for the purpose of conferring with their aide(s) or the teachers themselves. No observation of instructional activities was reported, however. The remaining seven teachers indicated that the Staff Development Coordinator had observed the class during an instructional period, but had focused on the activities of the aide. The impression gained by the evaluator from the Project managers was that no concentrated effort had been made to infuse the instructional programs due to the contingencies mentioned in Question 2, Process Evaluation. The evaluator could only concur that there could have been little gain expected from attempting to rearrange instructional programs at mid-year. Nevertheless, it also appeared reasonable to expect a greater frequency of contact with Project teachers than was observed. Teachers themselves expressed the need for greater support under the Project. Four teachers, when asked to provide any additional remarks which were otherwise not made in the interview, voluntarily stated that the most critical shortcoming of the Project was lack of support to teachers in organizing the instructional programs.

Another area in which the management staff could be negatively criticized was their failure to solve certain problems which arose early in the life of the Project and remained unresolved throughout the year. Unrest which resulted from the assignment of extra-instructional duties at Allan Junior High (see Question 1, Process Evaluation) is an example. Another was the utilization of aides to support instruction in subject areas other than reading (or, at Martin Junior High, mathematics).

The evaluator was uncertain as to why the Project managers were unable to efficiently resolve the problems; it was only evident that the problems had not been resolved and consequently had had a detrimental impact on the Project. When a developmental project such as Project Assist is placed in a school, it must have (or gain) the support of the school staff. Yielding to the inconveniences caused by the project (e.g., adherence to guidelines, additional effort required to collect data for evaluation purposes) is a compromise which must be made by the school staff. Careful and realistic planning, continued monitoring of the operation of the project, and quick reaction to those problems which do arise are the obligations of project management. In the case of Project Assist, there was a breakdown in one or more of those functions. Obviously, not all schools were committed to following the guidelines of the Project. Furthermore, management seemed unable to bring adequate pressure to bear upon principals and teachers to ensure that guidelines were followed. On the other hand, management was less than efficient in monitoring the operation of the Project. The result was a climate which, at least at one school, affected morale adversely and overall detracted from the proposed operation of the Project.

Summary and Discussion

The most notable changes which had occurred since January in the operation of the reading and mathematics components of Project Assist were as follows:

1. Arrangements to award gift books through the RIF component and to conduct a Math-in-Life session had been made and were soon to be carried out.

2. Except for a very small quantity which was still outstanding, those materials which were purchased with Project funds had been placed in the classrooms.

3. Staff development workshops for aides had been held monthly and, for the most part, were perceived favorably by those who attended.

4. Management of the Project appeared to be carried out more systematically than was thought to be the case in January.

5. Steps had been taken to make aides aware of their opportunity for employment for 1976-77.

Otherwise, the Project appeared to function in essentially the same manner as it had previously. No change was reported in the allocation of aides among schools or the assignments of aides within the various schools. The data which were collected indicated that there had been little or no change in work-related activities of aides. Other than the RIF and Math-in-Life components (which were initiated late and, consequently, had been reduced in scope), none of the instructional programs which were not operational in January had been infused. Of course, two reading labs (the sixth-grade BRL/Hoffman lab and the seventh- and eighth-grade EDL lab) had operated at Martin Junior High for the entire year.

Two criticisms should be pointed out regarding the operation of the Project. First was the disregard for complying with some of the guidelines

which were proposed for the Project. Infusion of curriculum components was abandoned due to contingencies which had arisen early in the year (i.e., late release of funds, changes in personnel, and the vacancy for Staff Development Coordinator). Some teachers felt compelled to use aides in ways other than those which had been prescribed in the aides' job description. Three of the four principals made assignments to aides which were either a direct violation of the job description for aides (e.g., assigning aides to monitor the lunchroom during periods when they could have been in classrooms) or a marginal violation (e.g., having a Project Assist aide work in a Title I reading lab while the Title I aide provided instructional support to teachers).

The second criticism, which is linked to the first, was the apparent inability of the Project managers to either correct the aforementioned inconsistencies or enlist the support of central administrators to see that they were corrected (see Question 4, Management Audit). As a consequence, Project Assist operated in a climate which made it almost impossible for the goals of the Project to be realized. As mentioned previously, there were very definite indications that the Project Coordinator was aware of these problems and had taken or was about to take steps to bring about their solutions (see Question 3, Management Audit).

In conclusion, the findings of both the January and May evaluations strongly suggest that care be taken in the interpretation of the end-of-year product evaluation to be conducted by the District's Office of Research and Evaluation. For the most part the instructional treatment outlined by the proposal for the Project did not exist: aides did not receive the level of training which was proposed; teachers received no training; some

instructional programs were not implemented at all; other instructional programs were reduced in scope and implemented very late (even after much of the posttest data had been collected); and instructional materials arrived very late. The comments made in the report of the January evaluation are still appropriate:

> Thus, it would seem that no decision can be made for the current Project period regarding the effects of specially trained instructional aides supporting the reading and mathematics curricula specified in the Project proposal (except, of course, for the reading labs at Martin). The hypothesis of significant program effects (as specified in the proposal) can be tested for the Martin reading labs, but care should be taken to identify the target populations served by those labs. Otherwise, "program effect" must be limited by an operational definition as greater support of the existing curriculum by aides and materials.[2]

---

[2] Ibid, p. 14.

APPENDIX

Date _____

School _____

Name _____

Title _____

Time: _____ Begin _____ End

1. Describe operation of Project since January:

2. Disposition of materials, equipment:

3. Implementation of curriculum components by school:

   Sims:

   Oaks Springs/Rosewood:

   Allan:

   Martin:

4. Procedure or system to monitor operation of Project at the classroom level (frequency of site visits, who is contacted):

5. Procedure to ensure aides are functioning according to job description:

6. Frequency of contact with classroom teachers (other than staff development):

7. Frequency of contact with building administrators:

8. Distinguish between Project Assist Aide and other instructional aide (e.g., Title 1):

9. Occurrences which may be reflected in test scores:

10. (Staff Development Coordinator) Staff development activities:

Date	Audience	Description

11. Future for the aides:

12. Attitude toward Project: ____produce significant achievement gains beyond nontreatment ____no significant effect

Remarks:

13. General remarks:

Date _____

School _____

Name _____

Time: _____Begin _____End

1. Assignment of aides:

2. Disposition of materials:

3. Disposition of equipment:

4. Duties assigned to aides:

5. Distribution of time for aides: ___% instructional ___% noninstructional

6. Contact with Project Coordinator since January: ___Yes ___No

   Describe:

7. Contact with Staff Development Coordinator: ___Yes ___No

   Describe:

8. Instructional support by aides next year:

   ___# instructional aides presently ___# next year

9. Future of Project Assist aides:

10. Dissemination of Project: ____visits by AISD personnel
____visits by external experts

Remarks:

11. Attitude toward Project: ____produce significant achievement gains beyond nontreatment
____no significant effect

Remarks:

12. Occurrences which may be reflected in test scores:

13. General remarks:

Date _____

School _____

Name _____

Time: _____Begin _____End

1. Experience in Project: ___this year only ___this year and previously in Project
   ___not entire year ___other
   Remarks:

2. All materials received: ___Yes ___No All equipment received: ___Yes ___No
   Disposition:

3. Inservice training: ___Yes ___No (___#)
   Teachers only: ___Yes ___No (___#)
   with aides: ___Yes ___No (___#)
   Remarks:

4. Implementation of curriculum components:

	Component	Staff Development	
Classroom	___oral language development	___Yes	___No
	___language experience	___Yes	___No
	___programmed instruction	___Yes	___No
	___RIF	___Yes	___No
Lab	___reading/math lab	___Yes	___No
	___materials and equipment in lab	___Yes	___No

5. Visits to classroom/lab by Project Coordinator: ___Yes ___No
   Remarks:

6. Visits to classroom by Staff Development Coordinator: ___Yes ___No (___#)
   Remarks:

7. Assignment of aides (schedule):

8. Services provided by aide: ____one-on-one ____small group ____resource, independent study
____total class ____other
Remarks:

9. Distribution of aide's time: ____% instructional ____% noninstructional
Remarks:

10. Satisfaction in working with aide: ____very satisfied ____satisfied
____not satisfied
Remarks:

11. Continuation of Project (though no funds), curriculum components: ___Yes ___No
Remarks:

12. Instruction support by aides next year: ____same level ____reduced level
Remarks:

13. Occurrences which may be reflected in test scores:

14. Attitude toward Project: ____produce significant achievement gains beyond nontreatment
____no significant effect
Remarks:

15. General remarks:

Name _____

School _____ Time: _____Begin _____End

1. Educational background: ____less than high school ____high school
   ____some college ____college ____other
   Remarks:

2. Experience as an aide: ____this year only in Project ____this year and
   previously in Project ____this year and other than project
   ____not entire year ____other
   Remarks:

3. Assignment: ____one classroom ____more than one classroom ____[illegible] ____other
   Remarks:

4. Grade level(s) at which you work:

5. Describe schedule/role in lab:

6. Subject area(s): ____reading/language arts ____mathematics
   ____social science ____science ____recreative arts ____other
   If other than reading/math, percentage in major areas:
   Remarks:

7. Instructional contact: ____one-on-one ____small group ____entire class
   ____resource independent study ____other
   Remarks:

8. Students with whom have contact: ____all in class ____lowest ability only ____the
   Remarks:

9. Responsibilities other than instruction: ____grading ____prepare materials
   ____monitor (lunchroom, hall, library, etc.)
   Remarks:

10. Distribution of time (while students at school):
    ___% instructional ___% noninstructional

    Remarks:

11. Instructional activities with students: ___drill (flash cards, spelling, computation, etc.) ___reading from basal/text ___workbook or worksheets

    Remarks:

12. Participated in training sessions since January: ___Yes ___No (___#)
    with teachers: ___Yes ___No (___#)
    aides only: ___Yes ___No (___#)

    Remarks:

13. Benefit of training sessions: ___help very much to do better job
    ___somewhat helpful ___little or no help

    Remarks:

14. Satisfaction in working relationship with teacher(s): ___very satisfied
    ___satisfied ___not satisfied

    Remarks:

15. Position for next year: ___application as an aide ___position as an aide
    ___other

    Remarks:

16. Assistance by Project staff in employment for next year: ___Yes ___No

    Remarks:

17. Attitude toward project: ___has helped improve reading/math skills over nontreatment
    ___no help beyond nontreatment

    Remarks:

18. General remarks:

Process Evaluation

for

Trilogy

and

Project Outreach

Conducted for the

Austin Independent School District

by

Mary Davis Minter

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes Part One of a two-part process evaluation of two components of Project Assist, namely Project Outreach and Trilogy. This portion of the evaluation consists of a summary of the review of the proposed program as submitted to the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for funding, approved program changes, scheduling of activities, and the level of present operations (e.g., number of persons served by the components, types of participants, beneficiaries, composition, etc.).

This portion of the evaluation was conducted primarily through semi-structured interviews with representatives of the respective project components, project administrators, school principals, and a limited number of participants. In addition, records of program operations and planned activities of the respective components were reviewed. Actual program activities were observed also.

Part One of the evaluation of Trilogy addresses itself primarily to the following areas:

- Proposed objectives and program focus
- Changes in objectives and program focus
- Group formation and composition
- Selection of Members
- Participation requirements
- Rehearsals and performances
- Schedules

Development of skits

- Role of group members
- Role of consultant
- The development process

Part Two of the process will be addressed to the following:

Actual level of operations (actual and planned performances and rehearsals)

Participants' perceived goals of Trilogy

Nature of audiences served by Trilogy (based on component records)

Reported audience perception of Trilogy goals

Apparent benefits to participants

Success of Trilogy in meeting the goals of the Emergency School Assistance Act.

The following issues related to Project Outreach will be addressed by Part One of the evaluation:

Project objectives and program focus

Counseling and Guidance supervision services

The referral process

Level of planned activity.

Part Two of the evaluation will be addressed to:

Indicators of component effectiveness

Outreach to parents

Actual level of operations

Method and plans for follow-up activities

Success of component in meeting the goals of the Emergency School Assistance Act.

It should be noted that the second part of the evaluation process will include interviews of component beneficiaries and participants and review of component records. In addition observations of proposed changes and additional interviews will be conducted with administrators and component staff members.

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ASSIST

Funding Information: Project Assist is an umbrella type program which encompasses several component projects. The program receives funding from the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare through the Emergency School Assistance Act (ESAA). The program is presently funded in the amount of $335,199. The current funding year began on September 1, 1975 and will end on June 30, 1976.

Description of Major Program Thrust: As an ESAA-funded project, Project Assist has as its major thrust the aiding of the desegregation process through the reduction of majority-minority discrepancies in the areas of reading, mathematics, and human relations. Both Project Outreach and Trilogy are directed toward the area of human relations. In this area, funding guidelines suggest that proposed projects fall in one of two categories:

1) Innovative, interracial components, and
2) Guidance and counseling.

Project Outreach addresses itself to the Guidance and Counseling functions and provides for non-scholastic (non-academic) services. Trilogy serves as an innovative, teacher-training model designed to provide favorable impact upon the attitudes of teachers as well as students and others involved in the desegregation process.

Further information on the individual components will be found in subsequent sections of this report which address specific aspects of the respective components.

Major Discrepancies: The application for funding for the current period was submitted to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in April, 1975. While approval of the program was indicated as early as June, 1975, formal approval was not received until late August, 1975. Actual funding of the program was not received until September, 1975. An amendment was submitted and approved in August which reflects necessary budget changes requested as a result of the late funding situation.

Potential Problem Areas Identified: Project Assist and, consequently, its components - Trilogy and Project Outreach - suffered temporary setbacks at the onset of funding as a result of the resignation of the project director (September 8, 1975).

On October 13, 1975, the Staff Development Specialist was officially assigned dual responsibilities as Project Coordinator and Staff Development Specialist. This dual position was continued through January 19, 1976. As a result of this administrative difficulty, both intra- and inter-component communications appears to be less than optimal. Evidence of communications problems were

most apparent in the Trilogy component as reflected in rumors that the component would be discontinued (some thought the extension of the project had already been discarded since there had not had any activity at the elementary level.), lack of information dissemination as to performance schedules and plans for involving persons at the project schools, schedule and project changes, and conflicting information about the project at various levels of the project.

Special Considerations: This portion of the evaluation process was conducted during the planning period for the 1976-77 program and funding year. Proposed changes in the project components will be included in Part Two of the evaluation.

TRILOGY

Objective: The objective of this component is stated in the request for funding as follows:

> "At the end of the instructional period (May, 1976) at least ten percent of the faculties of the project schools will score significantly higher on a late spring 1976 post test administration of an Ethnic Attitude Instrument than they did on an early fall 1975 pretest administration of the same instrument."

Level of Implementation: This objective was changed (eliminated) after review of the proposed measuring instrument reflected that the instrument to be used was a measure of "locus of control" rather than one of "ethnic attitudes". At the time of this evaluation, the staff of the Office of Research and Evaluation and the Staff of Trilogy were in the process of developing new project objectives. This area will be reviewed in Part Two of the evaluative process.

Background Information: This component is proposed as an extension of the previously ESAA-funded Trilogy to selected elementary and junior high project schools. The original Trilogy is a component of the Austin ISD's Division of Human Resources, Community Liaison Program, also funded by ESAA. The project name reflects the major cultural composition of the project and of the Austin community. It refers to the integration of Blacks, Chicanos, and Whites.

Trilogy is seen by its creators as 1) "a creative laboratory in integration", a demonstration of "good faith efforts" in assisting others with the problems of integration; and 2) the "involvement of people in integration", a first-hand experience of "successful integration."

The initial component consists of Community Liaison staff, students from several high schools and one junior high school, and teachers from these school. Those schools currently participating in the original component include LBJ High School, Austin High School, Lanier High School, and Bedicek Junior High School. None of the proposed project schools participated in this phase of Trilogy.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION

Focus of Component: This component is designed to depict a variety of student-teacher-administrative situations in such a way as to illuminate some of the pressures, problems, and positive encounters experiences in a multi-cultural environment, as portrayed by students and teachers of the project schools.

The primary emphasis of the program is to serve as a teacher-training model. In addition, it is to focus on the attitudes of educators and the skills, language patterns, and problem situations of the students.

Level of Implementation: No major changes or discrepancies are noted in the intended focus of the component. The component, however, has not yet become operational on the project school level.

Composition: The group will be tri-ethnic in nature. It will consist of students and teachers from the following schools: Martin Junior High School, Allan Junior High School, Oak Springs Elementary School, Rosewood Elementary School, and Sims Elementary School.

Level of Implementation: At the time of this evaluation, none of the elementary project schools had participated in the project. Likewise, no participants had been recruited from the junior high project schools. The first performance at any one of the project schools was held on January 27, 1976, at Martin Junior High School. One purpose of this performance was to recruit new members to the group from Martin Junior High School and from elementary project schools which were to be invited to the performance. In addition, this event was to serve as a preliminary activity for initiating the development of performances and topics related to the elementary project schools.

Information gathered from the elementary school principals and from the component staff were found to conflict. The principals indicated that they were unaware of the performance at Martin JHS and were unaware that any of the elementary schools had been invited to attend. The principals indicated that

there were no students from the elementary project schools attending the performance.

Recruitment efforts resulting from the performance at Martin JHS were not available at the time of this report.

The composition of the existing Trilogy group reflects a teacher-student ratio of 2 teachers /13 students. There are also three adult members from the Community Liaison Staff.

The ethnic composition of the group is as follows:

	Black	Chicano	White
Adults	1	2	2
Students	6	5	2
TOTALS	7	7	4

This ratio is thought to be a result of the selection of schools rather than the project goals or the recruitment efforts.

Selection of Participants: All new members, whether teachers or students, are required to attend or participate in at least three performances or practice sessions before being voted into membership by the members of the group. The purpose of this procedure is to acquaint and orient the prospective member to the demands, procedures, obligations, and the purpose of the group prior to the prospective member's making a commitment to such obligations.

Level of Implementation: Since no members have been recruited from the project schools at this time, review of the selection process is inapplicable

at the time of the evaluation.

Rehearsals: Rehearsals are held once or twice a week from 6:30 to 9:00 in the evenings. The rehearsals were previously held on Saturdays. This was changed by request of the participants. Generally when new materials are being learned or new skits are being planned, the rehearsals are held more frequently than twice a week.

Level of Implementation: Review of the process is not needed until the component becomes operational at the project school level.

Performances: The application for funding states that:

> "in addition to performing during preservice training, the troupe will offer presentations on a quarterly basis on the project campuses and one performance for each campus PTA."

Level of Implementation: To date only one performance has been held on the campus of a project school. One purpose of that performance was to recruit persons from the project schools to join. Other project schools were to be invited to the performance.

It should be noted that attrition problems involving members of the original Trilogy group has delayed progress toward this planned level of performance. On the original participants, six of the 15 members dropped out. In addition, three members of the Community Liaison staff who participated in the project were also lost from the project. Six new members have been added, including one new teacher.

Development of Skits: It is planned that a 15-minute performance will be developed for use with elementary school audiences. The regular performance

is usually about 35 minutes in length. It is expected that students and teachers from the project schools will be used as resource persons in identifying appropriate situations and problems encountered which are relevant to the audience being addressed by the performance. The consultant will be used to help organize the materials and to assist in planning the performance.

Level of Implementation: This aspect of the project has not yet become operational.

Replicability: The component proposal for funding states:

> "Trilogy will prepare for and perform on KLRN (a local educational television station). These programs will be used as a focus of classroom lessons and will be made available nationally through the National Public Broadcasting System."

Level of Implementation: This aspect of the project has been changed. Since the existing Trilogy is preparing a television presentation with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in conjunction with one of the ESAA-funded projects of the SEDL, it is expected that the new component will become involved in the same arrangement.

MAJOR COMPONENT DISCREPANCIES

The Trilogy component of Project Assist has not yet become operational. As a result of this fact, many of the planned interview questions are not applicable at this phase of the evaluation. Since the project is to be modeled after the existing Trilogy project, information has been included as to the method of operations and program development in the existing component.

Aspects covered in this phase of the evaluation process which were found to be inoperable will be reviewed again at the time of the second phase of the evaluation process.

POTENTIAL PROBLEM AREAS

1. The schools selected for this component have student populations comprised of more than 90% minority students. It appears unrealistic to expect to recruit and maintain a "tri-ethnic" student group from such population. Since the faculties of the project schools are more representative of the three major groups, this problem area does not appear to exist at the faculty level.

2. Lack of communication among the various levels of the component, particularly with the individual project school administrators, is likely to result in lack of enthusiasm and interest in the project on the part of such persons.

3. The delay in initiating activities at the elementary level clearly indicates one or more weaknesses in the capability of the project for expansion or extension at this time.

PROJECT OUTREACH

Objective: The proposal for funding of this component states the following objective:

> "By the end of the instructional period, September, 1975 - May, 1976, at least 33% of the students referred for social services will have improved in the area(s) for which they were referred, i.e., attitude, attendance, interactional skills, etc., as measured by records kept by project staff throughout the year and

by teacher questionnaires administered at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters."

Level of Implementation: The project has not yet been completed at the time of the evaluation. The measurement of this objective will be made at the time of the Outcome Evaluation being conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation. Presently, however, there are approximately 277 of the 300 students at Oak Springs Elementary; 107 of 130 at Rosewood; and 100 of 496 at Sims School being served by this project. It is noted that the populations of the junior high schools are less stable and that interns are assigned to work either at a direct services level or at an organizational and community level. Consequently, measurement of the exact number of beneficiaries at this time is quite difficult.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

Students referred by the counseling staff of the project campus are to receive services through one of three basic approaches:

1. Individual Counseling and Guidance
2. Group Counseling
3. Outreach to Parents.

Level of Implementation: There is only one major change noted in the operating procedures. In the fall semester, interns did not specialize in providing one type of Service (i.e., direct counseling services or services through community organizations and agencies). In the spring semester, however, specialized assignments have been made. Further explanation is included later.

The ten interns involved in the project are assigned to the following schools:

Sims School	2
Rosewood School	3
Allan Jr. High	2
Martin Jr. High	3
TOTAL	10

There are no interns assigned to Oak Springs Elementary School. Instead, emphasis is being given to Rosewood School.

Focus of Major Activities: The focus of the counseling process varies by project school. The project emphasis, by school, is as follows:

Rosewood: -Behavioral problems (specifically attention-getting patterns).
-Interaction of Teacher/pupil
-Problems related to the absence of positive male images

Sims: -Problem types run the gamut here. Major emphasis is thought to be directed toward family and economic problems.

Allan: -Attendance
-Behavioral problems

Martin: -Attendance
-Developmental problems (e.g., body-consciousness of girls in physical education program.)

Determining Appropriate Activities: When students are referred for services the counseling staff of the project school and the interns assigned to the school determine the proper activity placement of the student.

The project director provides a source of consultation services.

It is noted that both placement of students and the level of services received are affected by 1) the caseloads of the interns, 2) whether the student is receiving direct or indirect services (Please note that interns are assigned to one of two levels; either Counseling services (direct) with the referred individual students or with student groups; or Organizational and community services, in which the intern works with parents or teachers or related organizations in the community which are also seeking to address the attendance/behavioral problems of the students from the project schools) or 3) the major focus of the project.

The Referral Process: This referral process is not clearly outlined in the porposal for funding no in later project descriptions. It is apparent that this has been done to allow for needed flexibility in meeting the needs of the individual schools in the project. The differentiation of needs by project school is reflected in the variation of project focus by school. (See "Focus of Major Activities" for this component.)

Level of Implementation: Most referrals for counseling and guidance services are made through the school counselors. In some cases, the principal or teacher requests that the intern work with a student. When it is found that a student works well with or responds well to a given adult, identified as a "key person", then the intern may work through the key person in dealing with

the problems of the child. There are some cases in which "target clients" are identified by the interns as having behavioral problems that are thought to be "potentially responsive" to counseling and guidance services. The approval of the school counselor or principal is then obtained and the child becomes a client.

Records of referrals were not reviewed during this portion on the evaluation process. Such review will be conducted in the subsequent review session.

A copy of the format for such records is included in the appendix section of this report.

MAJOR COMPONENT DISCREPANCIES

No major discrepancies were noted.

POTENTIAL PROBLEM AREAS

One possible problem area was noted. In the community and organizational aspect of this component, there appears to be some confusion as to the role of the intern and/or the major focus of this aspect of the program. Should this confusion actually exist on the part of the intern, the effectiveness of the program might be diminished considerably.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Both Trilogy and Project Outreach have, of necessity operated with considerable autonomy due, first, to the absence of a project administrator, and later, to the dual responsibilities of the project administrator. As a result of this administrative difficulty, Trilogy, already suffering from the attrition of staff and students, has failed to initiate appropriate activities directed toward extension of the component into newly designated project schools. Project Outreach, on the other hand, has continued to grow and develop and had become more autonomous in its operations. This may be due to the fact that this project has been operational for five years and has maintained greater stability at the supervisory level while continuing to train new interns.

2. There appears to be a definite need for increased and improved communications at all levels of the Trilogy component. It is suggested, however, because of the various responsibilities and differing priorities of the school principals, that primary channels of communication be tied to those established for meeting the provisions of the new drama requirements for the elementary school (TEA 5160), in which elementary school teachers will be required to teach dramatics for one hour/day.

APPENDIX

1. Interview Questions for Trilogy
2. Interview Questions for Project Outreach
3. Schedule of Evaluation Activities

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR
PROJECT OUTREACH

1. Have there been any amendments to the original proposal? What is the effective date of such amendments?
2. What is the nature of the assessment (referral) process? What process and procedures are used to develop plans for assessment? Are they standard (uniform) for all participants?
3. What types of records are used?
4. What are the indicators used to determine each of the appropriate activities?
5. What methods are used to determine
   a) the appropriateness of the indicators
   b) the effectiveness of the assigned activity (ies).
6. How are changes affected as a result of the instrument employed?
7. At what points in the activity schedule are indicators used? What are the intervals between assessment periods?
8. What procedures are used to assign interns?
9. What is the number of interns assigned (by site)?
10. What are the roles of the interns?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TRILOGY COMPONENT

1. How is/was the group formed?
2. How balanced is the ethnic composition?
3. What is the balance of teachers and students?
4. How were/are members selected?
5. What processes are followed in developing skits?
   (e.g., use of group members resources; encouragement of initiative-taking, cooperation, etc.)
6. What do participants perceive to be the goals of trilogy?
7. How often are performances given?
8. To what types of audience are performances presented?
   (e.g., proportions or performances addressed to student audiences; teacher audiences; parents; other community groups, etc.)
9. How often are rehearsals held?
10. Does the time spent on Trilogy seem to complement or detract from other school work?
11. What benefits are apparent to participants from their being in Trilogy?
12. In what ways does Trilogy succeed in furthering the goals outlined by the ESAA guidelines?
13. In what ways are these goals not furthered (obstructed) by this component?

SCHEDULE OF EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Meeting with Representative from Office of Research and Evaluation	Jan. 9, 1976
Review of Project Information	Jan. 9-16, 1976
Meeting with Director of Project Assist	Jan. 20, 1976
Meeting with Director of Trilogy	Jan. 21, 1976
Meeting with Principal of Rosewood and Oak Springs Elementary Schools	Jan. 23, 1976
Meeting with Principal of Sims Elementary School	Jan. 27, 1976
Meeting with Principal of Martin Junior High School	Jan. 27, 1976
Observation of Production of Project Trilogy	Jan. 27, 1976
Meeting with Principal of Allan Junior High School	Feb. 3, 1976
Meeting with Director of Project Outreach	Feb. 4, 1976

In addition to these meetings, other meetings were scheduled with representatives of the Office of Research and Evaluation as needed.

Process Evaluation
for
Trilogy
and
Project Outreach

Part II

Conducted for the
Austin Independent School District
by
Mary Davis Minter

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Process Evaluation

Project Outreach and Trilogy

Part II

Overview: This evaluation consists of two parts. Part I was conducted in January, 1976. It included a summary of the program as proposed to the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the approved program changes; scheduling of operations; and the level at which the respective components were being implemented. Part I provided detailed descriptions of the program activities and identified changes in the funding proposal. A comparison was made of some aspects of the actual component operations and the proposed plan.

Methodology: Part II of the evaluation was conducted in May, 1976. The process used to conduct the evaluation included semi-structured interviews with component administrators, school administrators, counselors, teachers, and social work interns. In addition, records of actual operations, schedules of activities, and written reports were reviewed for information. This portion of the evaluation process addresses the following aspects of the respective components.

Trilogy

Summary of major changes in component

- objectives
- identification of target schools
- composition of Trilogy group
- development of presentations for target schools
- budget changes

Actual level of operations

- number of actual performances and nature of respective audiences
- Number and type of direct beneficiaries

Measurement techniques to be used

--objective measures

- subjective measures

Problematic aspects

- lack of self-direction
- absence of strong planning component
- need for input from project schools

Special considerations: Eastside Express

Project Outreach

Changes in program focus

Level of operations

- direct services.
- indirect services

Indicators of component effectiveness

- objective measures
- subjective measures

Major problem areas

- component knowledge of budgeting process
- lack of space for interns
- reassignment of interns
- methods and plans for followup

Trilogy

Background Information: The director of Project Assist was appointed approximately five months after the project was funded. (See Part I of the Evaluation Report for complete details). In trying to get the project "off the ground" after several major, but unavoidable delays, the new director assigned highest priority to operationalizing the instructional components of the project. The Trilogy component, being a non-academic component, received low priority. In meetings with the Program Officer from ESAA Regional Office, the director requested approval of a change in the focus of the component. It was agreed that the component would serve only as a teacher-training model. The change was approved and effected in April, 1976. It is important to note that this change occurred approximately eight months into the project year. The corresponding changes (i.e., changes in objectives, target schools, etc.,) will be noted in subsequent sections addressing specific details about the component.

There are no funds budgeted in the component for the position of Component Coordinator. This position is funded through the ESAA Basic Grant. Understandably, the coordinator has directed most of his efforts toward the activities of the Human Relations Division which is funded through the ESAA basic Grant.

The lack of direction afforded by the Project Administrator during the course of the year, the loss of lead-time, and the lack of self-direction within the component has resulted in failure to recruit participants from the project schools. Efforts to operationalize the component have resulted in a spinoff project being organized at Martin Junior High School. The absence of performances at Allan Junior High indicate that no efforts were made to recruit participants from this project school. Following the approval of programmatic changes affecting the overall direction of the component, primary efforts have been directed toward initiating involvement of the elementary schools in the teacher-training efforts. The major involvement at the junior high level has been through assistance to "Eastside Express", the spinoff project at Martin Junior High. Eastside Express will be further described in the "Special Considerations" section of this report.

Summary of Major Component Changes

Objectives: The objective of this component, namely the changing of attitudes of faculty and students, was deleted prior to the initial evaluation report. There is presently no stated objective for this component. It is expected that the objectives will be clearly delineated following this tranistory phase of operations. The focus of the component has been redirected. The project initially sought to focus on making administrators, faculty members, and students aware of the various pressures, problems, and special encounters resulting from interactions among and experienced by racial/ethnic groups at each of the three levels. The component is now focused on only the faculty members of the target schools. There are no direct student benefits or involvement of students at the project schools with the exception of Martin Junior High School, where a spinoff or trilogy has been organized.

Identification of Target Schools: Five schools were initially identified as target schools in the original proposal. Only four of the schools are presently being served by the project. Allan Junior High School is not being served by this component.

Composition of the Trilogy Group: The proposal indicated that Trilogy would consist of students and teachers from each of the target schools. The change in objective as indicated in the previous section has necessitated corresponding changes throughout the component, including a change in the proposed membership of the troupe. As a result of such changes, only the troupe as organized and described in Part I of the Evaluation Report is operational. No new members have been recruited from target schools.

Development of Presentations for Target Schools: There have been no special presentations developed for presentation to target schools except through the efforts of Eastside Express, which is not limited to target school audiences and which is not a direct activity of Trilogy. (See Special Considerations Section for additional details.)

Budget Changes: The budget consists of $1,500 for consultant services and $250 for travel costs for consultants. Since no new productions were developed and no new members recruited from target schools, these funds have not been needed as planned. Consequently, consultant services have been provided for "Eastside Express". Such changes were made locally since the funds are still being used for consultant services to a target school and members of the cast consist of students and teachers from the school.

Actual Level of Operations

Number of Actual Performances: Three performances have been conducted for target schools. Those performances and their respective audiences are identified in the following schedule

Date	Location	Audience
Jan. 27	Martin Junior High	Students and Teachers (7th Grade)
Jan. 27	Martin Junior High	Students and Teachers (8th Grade)
May 6	Rosewood Elementary	Elementary Teachers (Rosewood, Sims, and Oak Springs)

Direct Beneficiaries: The audiences of the performances are considered the direct beneficiaries of the component activities. There have been no performances made for PTA groups at target schools as initially planned as a result of the change in project objective and focus.

Measurement Techniques to be used to Determine Component Success

Objective Measures: A questionnaire has been developed for audience response to serve as a measure of component success. (See Attachment A: Reaction to Trilogy for format and content of the questionnaire.)

A second measure to be used will be the frequency of requests for presentations from target schools and the size of the respective audiences attending the performances.

Subjective Measures: Word of mouth comments, input made on a voluntary basis from program observers, and volunteer efforts at joining the troupe will be considered subjective measures of component success.

Major Problem Areas

Lack of Direction: There has been a definite lack of direction exhibited in this component. This is evidenced by the absence of activities at proposed target schools prior to the appointment of a full-time administrator for Project Assist and by the minimum level of activity found in the subsequent period in which the administrator's attention was directed to the instructional components of the project. The lack of activity may have resulted from extra precautions being taken by component staff in an effort not to overstep the authority afforded them. It is expected that this problem will be remedied since there is both a project administrator and a staff development specialist to provide guidance and assistance to the components. Also, since the instructional components appear to be operational at this point, it is expected that additional attention may be afforded the Trilogy component.

Planning Weaknesses: The planning aspect of this component appears to be extremely weak, particularly the long-term planning that should occur within the component. There is little evidence of input from the principals and participants of target schools.

While the principals generally agree that they want to be included in "special projects" of the school district such as Trilogy, it is clear that the need for such projects within a given target school is not the result of needs assessment planning or other planning efforts initiated or conducted by the administrators or staff of the individual schools. It is the opinion of this evaluator that some of the problem areas identified in Part I (p.11) of the Evaluation Report, such as the selection of schools and intra-project communication, are direct consequences of the lack of "pre-program" and on-going input and the subsequent "lack of commitment" to the component on the part of administrators.

It is recommended that a time schedule be included in the planning process which would indicate "target dates" for skit development, scheduled rehearsals, performances, recruitment goals, etc., to be completed. This scheduling should also include planned points for coordination and communication with target school personnel. Likewise, specific information should be provided regarding the description of the activity, quantifiable results to be expected, and the dates by which such results should be completed.

Special Considerations

On January 26, 1976, two performance of Trilogy were held at Martin Junior High School. Ms. Linda Vozelle, formerly a member of the Trilogy cast and presently a teacher at Martin Jr. High, observed the performances and became interested in developing a similar program which would focus on positive aspects of the Eastside of Austin including community and school problems. She organized a group of 19 students from Martin and checked with members of the Trilogy staff for assistance.

It was decided that the consultants that were provided by ESAA funding for the Trilogy component could be better utilized by providing consultant services to this project school since no new presentations were being developed as initially planned in the Trilogy proposal. Consultant services were then provided twice a week for the four weeks preceeding the first performance. Consultant services included assistance in rhythm, spacing, timing, and in fitting the complete performance together. Two additional sessions were held between consultants and the three adult sponsors of the project.

It was decided that the focus of the project would be on the classroom for this year. Presentations would include information about what teachers do that "bug" students and what students do that "bug" teachers. Discussions would be held concerning the analyses of why such behaviors occur.

The cast include students who are "model" students and students that are sometimes considered "problem" students. The criteria for selection includes the following:

- the individual must be able to work with the other students and adults;
- the individual must attend rehearsals;
- the individual must attend the performances;
- students who must be out of class for a performance are required to make up the work; (It is the teacher's responsibility to report problems to the sponsors of the project.)
- parental approval is necessary.

The following schedule was used in planning for the presentations:

- tryouts : (three weeks) 10 students were needed; 21 were chosen.
- rehearsals prior to first performance: (two weeks)
- development of skits and use of consultant time: (four weeks)

Input from students included suggestions for presentation topics, and skit planning. The production was to be called "Eastside Express".

Contacts with parents has increased the involvement of parents through their presence at the presentations.

There were five performance that had been conducted prior to the evaluation visit. The performances were held at the following locations.

- Martin Junior High School (2 performances)
- Martin Parent-Teacher Association
- Dawson Elementary School (5th grade classes)
- Metz Elementary School (5th grade classes)

Plans are being made to focus on the Eastside community for nest year.

Project Outreach

Background Information: This on-going project is funded primarily through the National Institute of Mental Health as a training program for social work interns. The position of supervisor is provided through the University of Texas at Austin. The ESAA funding of this component provides for consumable items for group work and play therapy ($550); non-consumable items for group work ($100); consultant services ($200); and travel for the interns ($576). No funds are provided for salaries of interns. The component represents a cooperative training program and supplementary social services between the University of Texas and the Austin Independent School District.

Objectives: The general objectives of this component are to improve pupil attendance, to improve attitudes toward school, and to improve interactional (interpersonal) skills of students. The emphasis or focus of the component differs according to the needs of the participating target schools (See Part I of the Evaluation Report). Program changes resulting since the previous report are included in this report.

Changes in Program Focus: It is noted that the component was originally designed to serve only problem students. This was changed when interns became aware that the project was becoming a "reward" or incentive for negative behaviors, since only problem students received the reinforcement of being out of class, working with the intern, participating in the interesting activities etc., As a result, changes were made to correct this (e.g., developing a special component to include "model students", such as a school newspaper, involvement of non-problematic students in group and dyad activities, etc.).

Level of Operations (Direct Services):

A. Rosewood Elementary School: There were a total of 62 students (unduplicated count) served by this component during the year. There were approximately 20 persons who received services in both the fall and spring semesters. At least 3 of the students were beneficiaries or more than one type of component activity (e.g., individual counseling and group counseling for different problems.).

Students were referred from both 4th and 5th grades and came from a total of seven different homerooms.

Activities included individual counseling and behavior modification activities for students referred for fighting or for

poor self images; socialization skills workshops for student groups and special field trips.

B. Sims Elementary School: A total of 45 (unduplicated count) students received services from this component. Four of these students received services in both fall and spring semesters. Twelve of the 45 students were "model students" who were selected to participate in writing a school newspaper. These students were being "rewarded" for their good behavior patterns exhibited. Two other model students were used in dyads involving students referred for problem behavior.

Activities included art therapy, individual counseling, socialization skills counseling with groups and dyads, development of a school newspaper, training in cultural heritage, and behavior modification activities.

Referrals came from eleven classrooms. Interns worked primarily with students designated as non-Title I students since the counselor was limited by funding guidelines to serving only Title I designated students.

C. Allan Junior High School: Twenty eight (unduplicated count) students received direct services as a result of this component. Of these 28, six received continuous service through the fall and spring semesters. Eleven of the students were dropped because the intern working with them was reassigned to Martin Junior High School (See comments in Potential Problem Section). Seven others were also dropped from receiving direct services when the nature of the intern's assignment was changed to one of providing more indirect services.

Activities included behavior modification activities and technique application, values clarification (role play) activities, individual and group counseling sessions, and field trips.

Referrals were made primarily through the counselors and administrative staff. Some students were selected by the interns from observations made by the intern in classrooms and in other school situations and activities.

D. Martin Junior High School: There were thirty-one students who received direct services from this component. Six of them received more than one type of service. Ten students received services throughout both the fall and spring semesters.

Activities included home visits, field trips, behavior modification activities, group counseling in health and hygiene, and individual counseling activities.

Counselees were referred by parents, teachers, and administrative personnel. Referrals were directed through the office of the counselor.

Level of Operations (Indirect Services): Records of indirect services were not reviewed in detail by the evaluator. The number of students receiving these services was not determined since many activities involved families of students other than the referred student. Consequently, these children were often the beneficiaries of these indirect services although some of them attended other schools (e.g., the community/faculty survey of attitudes toward school).

Activities include conducting attitudinal surveys, working with local support teams, planning and working closely with school counselors in planning direct services, contacting parents regarding truant students, and working with community service agencies.

Indicators of Component Effectiveness

A. Objective measures: No systematic procedures have been established to objectively determine either individual success or group progress within this component. Records are kept as to specific activities of individuals but progress measures appear to be primarily subjective in nature (mostly individual judgements). There is no explicit standard for determining whether an individual should be assigned to individual or group counseling activities (or to both types). Likewise, once an individual joins an activity, it is likely that the individual continues in the activity until the end of the school year unless the individual terminates enrollment from the school prior to the end of the school year or services can no longer be provided to the individual because of changes in the schedule or activities or assignment of the intern (s).

B. Subjective measures: Several measures, some of which could easily be converted to objective use, are presently being used to gauge success of an activity and/or individual progress. Among the measures being used are:

- changes in frequency of involvement in negative behaviors (of which the counselor or intern are aware)
- changes in the apparent attitude of student although no baseline data is established about initial attitudes.

Major Problem Areas

1. Component Knowledge of Budgeting Process: The most common problem mentioned by interns was the failure of the component to provide funds for food and for special materials such as rugs and pillows. The interns did not understand that food costs are ineligible cost items under the ESAA funding guidelines. Whenever such items were requested, the requests were routinely denied. As a result, the rejection of such requests was perceived negatively by the interns. Likewise, requests for rugs, pillows, and other more permanent items were denied because such items must constitute line items, specifically, in the ESAA proposed budget. Since the person who was primarily responsible for negotiating the budget items with component staff was no longer with Project Assist, and since this position was not immediately filled, the lack of budget clarification became a source of misunderstanding.

   It is suggested that copies of the ESAA funding guidelines be provided to all agencies participating in the ESAA-funded components. It is expected that there will be closer contact between Project Assist administrative staff and the supervisors and/or coordinators of the components. As a result, most of the misunderstandings resulting from the isolated condition in which the component was operated this year.

2. Lack of Space: Interns in two of the schools, Allan and Sims, did not have space designated for their use on a regular basis. These schools have large enrollments and are otherwise rather crowded and cramped for extra space; it is understandable that appropriate adjustments must be made accordingly. Lack of regularly available space for counseling and other special activities of this component, however, is likely to result in loss of time in finding unused space, notifying participants of changes in meeting places, in having participants find the places promptly, and in moving materials back and forth. When space is available only at certain times of the day, this is likely to foster complaints from teachers about students having to be excused from class regularly in order to participate in non-academic activities.

Participating schools should agree to provide at least minimum required space for the component activities on the days in which the interns will be working at the school.

3. Reassignment of Interns: The reassignment of social work interns causes special problems for some students who have been counseled regularly by the interns and who suddenly find that the service must be terminated. The aborted service is thought to give rise to additional behavior and adjustment problems on the part of such students.

Provisions might be made to have the caseloads of interns reassigned to other interns working at the school or to have the counselors work closely with the students during the transition period. Students thought to have special emotional problems or behavioral adjustment problems might be considered for special attention by the regular school counselor.

4. Methods and Plans for Follow-up: There are no systematic plans for follow-up activities for students served in the 1975-76 school year. Many of the students are fifth graders who will be attending six grade in schools not served by Project Outreach. New interns assigned to present schools will be serving students as they are referred during the 1976-77 school year. No carry-over referrals are planned.

Conclusions

The ESAA-funded components, Trilogy and Project Outreach, were not able to meet their objectives as initially proposed. Program adjustments were made in both components. The adjustments seem to be realistic and necessary in view of the start-up and operational problems encountered by the components. The adjustments appear to have been made with every intention toward furthering the goals of the overall ESAA program.

Definite weaknesses were found in the Trilogy component. The primary weaknesses appear to be in planning and self-direction rather than in the performance, production, or design aspects of the component. Corrections in the planning process may necessitate minor changes in and/or additions to the basic design of the component. Such changes, however, should increase the likelihood of success in meeting the overall objectives.

Project Outreach has provided most of the services proposed in the funding proposal. Areas in which additional attention might be directed are: 1) the designation of one person to serve as a coordinator of activities of the interns within the individual schools; and 2) clarification of the role of interns providing indirect services. Services to be provided by these interns should be specified and the number of persons to be served should be estimated.

Specification of the methods of contact and referrals for indirect services should be included in the proposal also.

The funding proposals of the individual components as submitted to the ESAA office appear to be only skeletal in nature. In addition to the proposals submitted to ESAA, there should be kept on file complete sets of component plans which include specific information as to the number and types of beneficiaries, specific procedures to be used, and measurement techniques proposed for determining component efficiency and effectiveness. Such information is essential to an on-going planning effort, to systematic identification of potential problem areas and needed changes in operational levels and procedures, and in providing a basis for evaluation.

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

REACTIONS TO TRILOGY:
WHAT IS IT, AND HOW DID YOU LIKE IT?

1. Based on today's performance, what do you believe the members of Trilogy are trying to accomplish? (What are the major goals of Trilogy?)

2. How effectively are they meeting these goals, in your opinion? (Circle)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Effectively	Somewhat Effectively	Neutral	Somewhat Ineffectively	Very Ineffectively

3. What did you especially <u>like</u> about today's performance?

4. What did you especially dislike?

5. What suggestions do you have for improvement?

over

6. What are some of the teacher, student, family and school pressures on the elementary level that could be investigated with methods like those used in Trilogy?

7. Can the use of drama techniques like those used in Trilogy be adapted to the elementary level:

a. For students to watch?

1	2	3	4	5
Yes, very well		no opinion		no, not at all

b. For students to participate in as cast members?

1	2	3	4	5
Yes, very well		no opinion		no, not at all

Attachment B

List of Contacts Made During Evaluation

Mr. Roosevelt Thomas, Principal, Sims Elementary School

Mr. Jerry Richard, Principal, Allan Jr. High School

Js. Jetta Todaro, Director, Project Assist

Ms. Bobbye Kincheon, Staff Development Director, Project Assist

Ms. Eunice Garcia, Coordinator, Project Outreach

Mr. Dan Robertson, Coordinator, Trilogy

Ms. Thelma Madison, Teacher, Sims Elementary School

Ms. Eucnie Houston, Counselor for Title I, Sims Elementary School

Ms. _____Kerr, Teacher, Sims Elementary School

Ms. Dorothy Marshall, Teacher, Allan Jr. High School

Ms. Rita Henson, Teacher/Consultant, Allan Jr. High School

Mr. Larry Elsner, Project Outreach Intern

Ms. Laura Urdaneta, Counselor, Martin Jr. High

Ms. Linda Vozelle, Director/Sponsor, Eastside Express

Ms. Trudie Preciphs, Project Outreach Intern

Ms. Mary Acosta, Project Outreach Intern

Mr. Ron Ortman-Glick, Project Outreach Intern

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Division of Educational Development
Department of Developmental Programs

PROJECT ASSIST III

To: Persons Addressed April 13, 1976

From: Jetta A. Todaro, Project Assist Coordinator

Re: Contracted Process Evaluation Report for Project Assist III (Lym and Krueck).

The Coordinator of Project Assist has reviewed the document presented by Lym and Krueck regarding the Instructional Aide Component, Project Read, and Project Math. The evaluation did not include and/or emphasize several important points concerning the context within which Project Assist took place. The following items must be considered when the report is studied:

1. Due to late funding because of Austin Independent School District's non-compliance with the Office of Civil Rights regulations, the Pilot did not begin until September 2, 1975.

2. On September 8, 1975, the Project Coordinator resigned. The Staff Development Coordinator, who was to start aide inservice on September 9, 1975, took over as Acting Coordinator, filling both positions until a new Staff Development Coordinator was hired.

3. The Staff Development Coordinator was not hired until January 19, 1975. Three attempts were made with the Personnel Office to choose applicants with the necessary qualifications and with the willingness to leave a "term contract" job, and accept a "grant contract" job. A further delay was caused by the necessity of finding a replacement for the person chosen.

4. The above factors precluded complete and individualized staff development of aides on a preservice/inservice basis, and it prevented the teachers and the aides from being trained together at the beginning of the year.

5. From the developmental to the implementation stages of the program, other changes took place:

   a. The Martin teachers who had designed the math program were no longer at Martin Jr. High. They were replaced by three teachers either new to the district, or new to teaching.

   b. Martin had two major changes in the position of principal from August to November, 1975.

c. The facilities given to the teachers at Martin to implement the "lab approach" were not conducive to a lab or classroom situation.

d. The school staffs requested that the aides be placed on campus as soon as possible after hiring in order to begin actual classroom orientation and inservice with the classroom teachers.

e. The materials were to have been chosen in July and August, 1975, however because of late funding, one staff member, and a month of aide preservice, the requisitioning of materials did not begin until October, 1975.

f. In September, 1975, the district staff from the Division of Instruction became more involved in Project Assist, providing input into the choice of curricula and materials to supplement the district programs. This proved to be a definite asset to the project, although it involved more coordination between staff and teachers.

6. The present Coordinator offered the reading and math curricula as stated in the proposal as possibilities to the project schools. They have had their choice throughout the year to choose instructional materials and inservices in those areas. Given the stated context of the project, it was not thought to be possible nor beneficial to "dictate" the program as designed, but only to offer choices, following the plans as closely as possible.

7. It should be emphasized that until January 19, 1976, there was insufficient staff to systematically monitor the project as planned. Periodic visits and formal or informal communication between the schools and existing Project Assist Staff did occur in order to support and continue to implement all aspects of the pilot.

8. The guidelines of the pilot were reviewed in detail with each project principal during the first week of September. Any discrepancies regarding such items as the selection or placement of aides occurred with the full knowledge of the guidelines and were justified on the basis of school needs.

Based on the context described and the evaluation report, I would like to make a number of recommendations:

1. The Coordinator and the Staff Development Coordinator should continue to assess teacher and aide needs regarding the program components and materials through formal and informal communication with the principal, faculty and staff. This will provide for the ongoing improvement of the program, utilization of materials and services offered.

2. The Staff Development Coordinator should continue to systematically monitor the instructional aides in order to ascertain their effectiveness within the program, and provide detailed observation forms assessing their professional activities as a basis for providing ongoing staff development.

3. The Staff Development Coordinator should continue to systematically monitor the instructional aides in order to provide adequate information for completing the evaluation and recommendation forms.

4. The project staff should continue to offer assistance in the areas of instruction delineated in the program narrative under Project Read and Project Math.

5. The project staff should continue to assist the appropriate teachers with the management and design of their classrooms wherever possible, given the arrival of materials and the school commitment necessary to operate the program.

6. The Project Coordinator should schedule closeout inservice sessions with each school staff at an appropriate time to review evaluation information, to discuss the closing of Project Assist, and to review the project's effect on the school program.

7. The Project Coordinator should schedule meetings with the targeted 1976-1977 schools in order to make plans for the implementation of the new ESAA pilot if funded for another year.

8. The Project Coordinator should establish procedures with the Austin Independent School District's Personnel Office regarding the recommendations and placement of Project Assist aides in available district programs at the termination of the present ESAA pilot.

9. The Project Coordinator should continue to review the proposal with the principals regarding the implementation of components for the remainder of the year and provide ongoing documentation of the changes in the programs, and the reasons for the changes, with the appropriate agencies.

10. The project staff should complete the process of the transfer of materials from the previous to the present elementary project schools.

11. A preliminary evaluation and audit would be more beneficial to the project staff if it occurred at an early time in the year (i.e. November) in order to determine changes in the program.

12. Based on the limitation of the evaluation and audit expressed by Lym and Krueck, the project and evaluation staff should, if possible, attempt to determine policies and methods regarding the collection of the data for assessment purposes.

The remainder of the project will be spent in the ongoing implementation of the components, in following the recommendations, and in preparing the closeout reports.

ADM. 804

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

OFFICE MEMO

To: Dr. Jack L. Davidson *Date:* 4/27/76

From: Freda Holley

Subject: Project Assist Evaluation

The comments of Jetta Todaro highlight very well two points that I have tried to make myself.

1. Implementation problems at many levels lead to federal program failures.

2. An adequate evaluation should clearly document such problems in a speedy fashion. Unfortunately, the resources allocated to Project Assist were insufficient to provide this kind of process evaluation and the external site visit approach was substituted. External evaluators rarely have time or access to process evaluation information. Process information is most important to program improvement, but it is the most expensive to gather and provide.

These comments will be included along with the external evaluations in the final report. However, despite the reasons that led to implementation failure at the point of that site visit, the ultimate result for the year will probably be that students did not learn more as a result of the project expenditures. The accountability for that failure—beyond the late funding and guideline restrictions from USOE—lies with all of us, the total school system. Reasons for failure will be irrelevant to the future of those students we might have helped.

cc: Mauro Reyna

GLOSSARY

1. affective - a term used to describe feeling or emotion instead of thought.

2. California Achievement Test - an instrument which measures ability to understand the content material presented, particularly English vocabulary and comprehension, in progressively difficult situations.

3. cluster groups - groups formed around one target child, with group members selected by the child.

4. cognitive - a term used to describe mental processes or thought.

5. comparison schools - schools generally comparable to a project's target schools but which did not have the given project operating in them. The progress of students in comparison schools is compared to the progress of students in target schools to see if the program helped the target school students.

6. context - the situation in which the project functions; factors, both positive and negative, that prevail in the experimental and control situation, over which the project has no control.

7. criterion measure - the test, questionnaire, or other instrument used to determine whether an objective or other stated level of performance has been attained.

8. decision questions - questions concerning the effectiveness of the program, posited by system, program, and school staffs, and for which data is supplied by the evaluation staff.

9. ESAA - Emergency School Assistance Act, passed by Congress in 1973, to aid schools undergoing the desegregation process.

10. evaluation design - an outline of a system by which the evaluation of a program will proceed.

11. gain - a statistical increase; usually defined as the difference between a prescore and a postscore.

12. general aide - person whose purpose and training is directed toward overall assistance to students and teachers, and whose duties are not specifically predefined.

13. inputs - resources such as extra staff, training, and project activities which occur outside the classroom.

14. inservice training - any training which occurs after the start of the instructional phase of a program.

15. instrument - a test; a measure; an evaluation tool.

16. Likert-type scale - a question format which contains a statement followed by a continuum of responses from which a person is asked to choose and designate the response most like his/hers on the statement.

    Example: How much do you use your Project Assist aide for reading instructional activities?

1	2	3	4	5
never	rarely	sometimes	often	always

17. Math Attitude Test - an instrument constructed by the Office of Research and Evaluation to measure students' attitudes toward math and math classes.

18. mean - the average of a set of numbers.

19. observation - a period of time during which a process evaluator/classroom observer witnesses and records, for the purpose of evaluation, the various functions, resources, and activities of a classroom.

20. outcomes - the results of the project, defined in terms of student behaviors and achievements.

21. pilot project - a term used to characterize an experimental program, the effectiveness of which is being ascertained.

22. posttest - a second admanistration of a test after an interval of time in order to measure individual gain or loss in areas covered by the test.

23. preservice training - job-related training given before the start of the job. In Project Assist, it refers to training to be given to aides and teachers before the start of school.

24. pretest - an initial administration of a test that is to be administered again at a later date in order to measure individual gain or loss in areas covered by the test.

25. probability - an arithmetical expression describing the likelihood of an occurrence of an event. For example, a probability of .05 means that the difference in scores between two groups could be expected to occur due to chance alone only five times out of a hundred.

26. processes - in reference to Project Assist, the classroom activities which utilize the project inputs and strive to yield the project outcomes.

27. process evaluation - data gathered through various instruments and the observation of behavior in a classroom situation.

28. program implementation - the process of putting a program into operation.

29. programmed instruction - a method of instruction in which the material to be learned is broken down into small, progressively more difficult steps, which are to be learned in sequence.

30. Project Assist aide - person whose purpose and training is directed toward giving reading instructional assistance to teachers and students.

31 Project Math - The math component of 1975-76 Project Assist, including instructional aides and materials and a special curriculum, to be implemented at Martin Jr. High School.

32. Project Outreach - The social work component of 1975-76 Project Assist. Through this component, graduate social work interns worked with referred Project Assist students.

33. Project Read - The reading component of 1975-76 Project Assist, for which the majority of the year's funds were appropriated. The component was proposed to include instructional aides, suppelmentary materials, and a special curriculum.

34. random selection - a sample of the members of some total population, selected in such a way that every member of the population has an equal chance of being included.